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Buddhist Cave Temples of India

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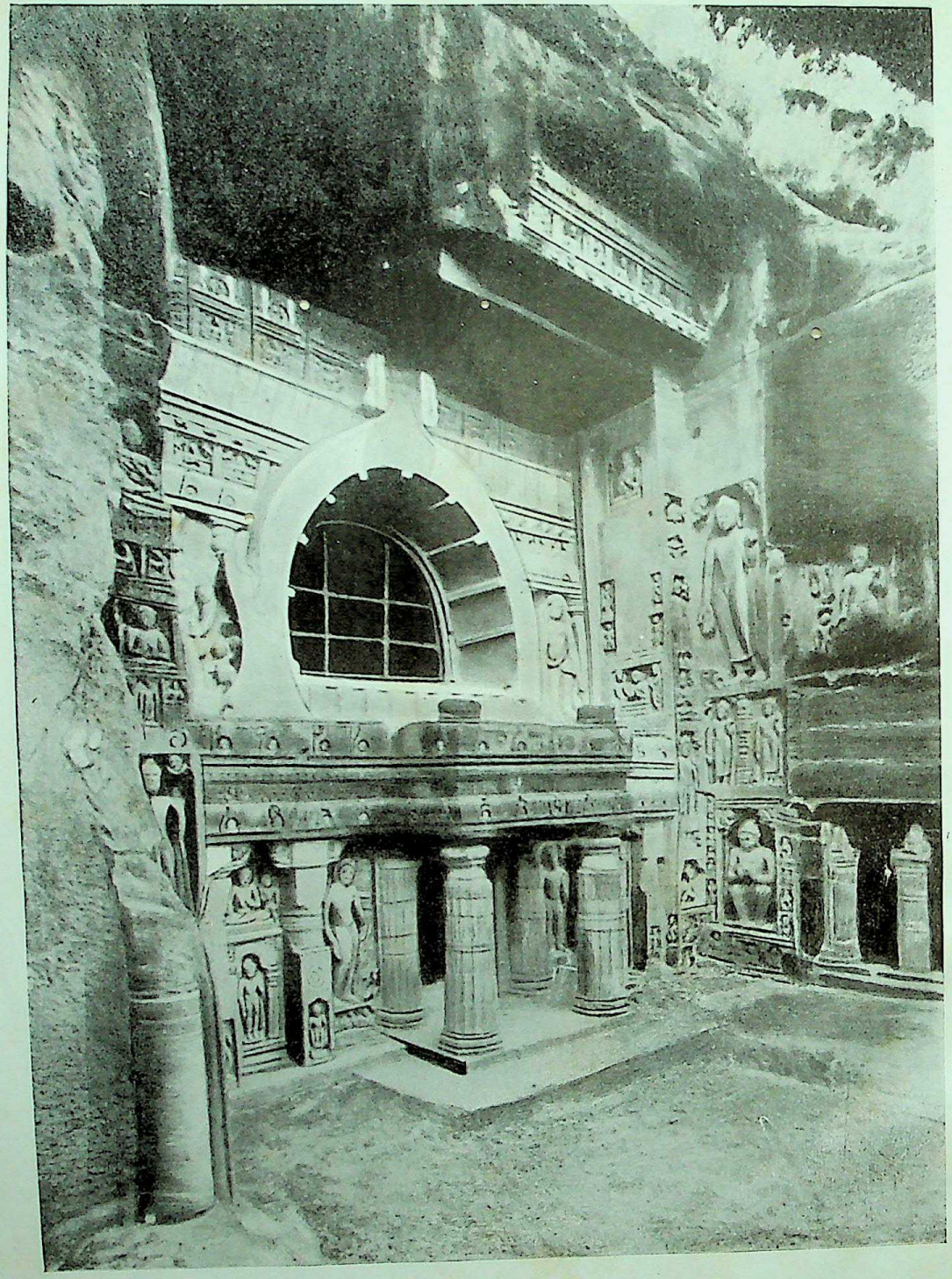

FACADE OF CAVE XIX. [*Frontispiece.*]

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Buddhist Cave Temples of India

by

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PREFACE.

THE BUDDHIST CAVE TEMPLES OF INDIA appear to be little known to the general public of India, especially those living outside the Bombay Presidency, or the Nizam's Dominions, though amongst them are some of the grandest, most interesting, and probably the oldest monuments of Ancient India.

With the exception of "Cave Temples of India," a monumental work by those eminent authorities, Fergusson and Burgess, now out of print, I know of no one volume which contains a description of more than two or three groups of caves. No endeavour seems to have been made so far to gather together, in handy form, information regarding even the main groups, as has been done in this book. Authoritative descriptions are to be found in publications of the Archæological Department of India, in the reports for the late 'eighties, and other expensive and voluminous works on Ajanta and a few individual groups, but these are not available to the general public.

Professional archæologists may complain that this book is not sufficiently technical for their purpose, and philologists may complain of the spelling and accenting of proper names. On this point it has been found exceedingly difficult to reconcile the opinions of authorities, who differ considerably among themselves. It is not felt, however, that these defects, and many others, which must occur in a work of this nature, where much

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of the subject matter is controversial, will detract from its value or interest to the not-too-serious general reader, and I must crave the leniency due to a "first offender."

A large number of these caves are within fairly easy access of the traveller, and the best ways of approaching them have been given. If this publication does nothing more than stimulate an interest in the subject its object will have been accomplished.

With the exception of Plate VII the Lomas Rishi, material for which has been kindly supplied by the Indian Museum, the illustrations are all from photographs taken by the author.

Calcutta, 1933. R. S. WAUCHOPE.

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CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN OF BUDDHISM.

BEFORE giving any description of the Buddhist monuments to be found in India it will be as well to give a short outline of the origin of the faith.

Gautama, who afterwards assumed the title of Buddha "The Enlightened," was, according to traditional dates, born in the year 623 B.C. and died in 543 B.C., but according to Chinese computations his birth is given as 1027 B.C., other authorities have given other dates for his death ranging between 480 B.C. and 388 B.C. His father, Suddhodāna, was a chieftain of the Kshātriyas inhabiting the small state of Kapilavastu or modern Bhinla in the province of Oudh, a town lying about 50 miles to the east of Fyzābād and 100 miles north of Benāres. It was known as the Sākiya country, hence Gautama is known also as "Sākiya Muni" or the "Sākiya saint." He was named by his parents Siddhartha and was married to Gopa, the daughter of Dandapāni, also of the Sākiya clan and had one child. He is generally considered to have lived to the age of eighty or eighty-one.

Early in his life he was filled with a deep compassion for the misery and degeneracy of the human race, and the illusion of earthly things. In spite of all the luxuries and pleasures of his father's house he could not overcome his melancholy thoughts, but determined to find peace for his own soul and

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bestow it on others. At the age of twenty-nine he left his home and, having attended the schools of the Brāhmans without profit, lived for years the life of a solitary ascetic, until by dint of profound meditation he acquired clear notions on the life of man and his relation to the universe. It was while sitting in meditation under the pipal or "Bodhi" tree at Gāya that the revelation of "enlightenment" came to him and he attained to Buddhahood, after which he began to teach his new faith in opposition to the prevailing Brāhmanism. The five precepts of the Buddhist code are,—not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to lie, and not to give way to drunkenness. He preached that the ultimate salvation from the evils of existence and rebirth was Nirvāna. It is not easy to determine exactly what this Nirvāna means, but the best authorities affirm that it means the complete annihilation of the "self," and its re-absorption into the cosmic universe. What Brāhmanism did with the heretic Buddhist system, how it absorbed it, is one of the most interesting features of Indian religion. And yet the taunt of the Buddhists remains true, that the vedantist Brāhmans are disguised Buddhists, to this day. Shankaracharya, who lived near about the eighth century A.D., had completely sucked the Buddhist egg dry by his vedantic doctrine, which leaves no room for Buddhism. The early Buddhist precept was to harm nobody, vedantism says if I harm another person I harm myself first, because my neighbour is myself. This is the same old Buddhist teaching in the vedantic terminology.

Gautama did not leave his doctrines in writing, but declared them orally to his disciples, who treasured them up carefully and wrote them down after his death. The determination of the canon of the Buddhist scriptures as we now possess

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them was the work of three successive councils, and was finished at least two centuries before Christ. The religion soon spread in Hindustān but was chiefly advanced by the great ruler Asoka, the grandson of Chandra Gupta, who ruled the great Mauryan Empire, which covered the greater part of India, in the third century B.C. Asoka himself later in life became a Buddhist monk, and sent missionaries in various directions to propagate this new faith, and it eventually spread to many parts of the world, including Ceylon, Jāva, Nepāl and China, where the Buddha is known as "Fo," and Japan, in many of which countries it still prevails, though in a very greatly modified form than that preached by the great teacher. At present it is professed by a very large portion of the human race.

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CHAPTER II.

BUDDHIST MONUMENTS.

THE various examples of early Buddhist architecture found at the present time may be classed under the following categories:—

1. Stūpas or Topes.
2. Stāmbhas or Lāts.
3. Caves, which may be either (*a*) Chaitya Halls or Temples; (*b*) Vihāras or Monasteries; (*c*) Bhikshu-grihas or Hermitages, with all of which are usually associated Pondhis or cisterns.

It must not be supposed that stūpas originated entirely with the Buddhists, the Jains used this form of memorial in early times and it was probably a glorification of the tumulus of the Aryans, the earliest known semi-civilized invaders into India. Many of the symbols used in Buddhist architecture were to be found long before the preaching of Gautama. They are mostly adaptations of original Vedic structures, but owing to the fact that at the present time their remains are found chiefly in association with Buddhistic monuments they have now come to be known as symbols of that teaching. The word "Stūpa" is derived from a word meaning "to heap," "to erect," and is applied to any pile or mound, as to a funeral pile, hence it comes to be applied to a tumulus erected over any of the sacred relics of Buddha, or on spots

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consecrated as scenes of his acts. It should be noticed that the shape of the stūpa is exactly like a bubble, symbolizing the evanescence of this world. Such were the stūpas erected by Asoka all over Northern India and raised in Ceylon in early times. But not only for Buddha himself but also for the Sthaviras or Theros, the elders of the Buddhist religion, were stūpas erected; and in later times, probably for ordinary monks. When the wonderful caves in which Buddhistic worship was carried on and known as Chaityas were hewn out of the rock, it was necessary to have in these some form of altar on which the relics of Buddha might be displayed to the congregation, even as was done in some cases before the time of Asoka. This altar was made in the form of a model of a stūpa and was called a "Dhātugarbha" or "Dhātugopa" abbreviated into "Dāgopa," or its more common form "Dāgoba." The word stūpa has been corrupted into the Anglo-Indian word "Tope" which is generally applied to such of the monuments as are structural and outside caves, as Dāgoba usually denotes those inside caves or attached to them and hewn out of the solid rock.

Around these stūpas is to be found a rail now known as the "Buddhistic rail" which is represented in the caves in the form of ornamental sculpture. This rail originated with the older Vedic villages and might also be called the "Vedic rail." Very fine examples of these are to be found at Sānchi Tope and Bharut (now removed to Calcutta Museum), where they have been lavishly embellished with carvings presented as a rule by some rich devotee. In the earlier times these rails were employed round the sacred trees, stūpas and even temples, and it is believed that the palisade round a Vedic village very much resembled this type of rail and was

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probably constructed of wood; excavations at Patna, the modern site of the ancient capital of the Mauryan Empire, Pātaliputra, show evidence of this form of rail having been used in the surrounding fortifications. The simplest form of rail consists of square pillars set at a little more than their own breadth apart, and joined by three thin broad bars rounded on the sides and placed near to one another and to the head rail which joins the top of the pillars. So faithfully have the stūpas been copied in the form of Dāgobas that in nearly every case the "rail pattern" is one of the features on these altars, as well as the umbrella which surmounted the stūpa.

STAMBHAS or LATS are pillars usually erected in front of a temple, whether Saiva, Vaishnava, Jaina, or Bauddha, and carrying one or more of the symbols of the religion to which it was dedicated. Outside the great Chaityas of Karli and Kānheri we find these two pillars bearing the emblems of the lion and the wheel on each side of the porch or entrance, just as in still earlier times we read that at the porch or entrance of the Great Temple of Solomon were found the pillars of Jāchin and Boaz, at Karli however the pillar originally surmounted by the wheel has since been replaced by a Saiva Temple. The Buddhist faith adapted ancient Vedic symbols and the Buddhist Stāmbhas are found bearing the Lions of Brāhma and the wheel or Chakra, representative of Dharma or Law; the Saiva Stāmbhas bear a trisula or trident, the Vaishnava a figure of Garūda, the Jaina a Chaumukha or fourfold Tīrthankara, that is to say, the head and shoulders of a Jaina elder facing in all four directions. Some of the finest Buddhist Lāts erected by Asoka are apparently not in connection with any temple or building,

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but bear his famous edicts or other inscriptions, they may however have been erected in connection with wooden or brick structures which have disappeared ages ago.

CHAITYAS. The word is synonymous with the word "stūpa" and is derived from a root *chita* signifying a "funeral pile" or "heap" and hence means a monument and an altar, and in a second sense it is used by Jains and Buddhists to indicate a "temple containing a Chaitya," in Nepāl and Tibet and in Buddhist Sanskrit literature, the word is applied to the model of a stūpa placed in the temples and to which is also applied the word Dāgoba. These Chaityas or Dāgobas are an essential feature of chapels or caves excavated solely for purposes of worship, and which may therefore appropriately be called "Chaitya caves." Another derivation is from the root *chit* meaning "meditation," and since it was the practice to meditate before the altar on which were displayed the sacred relics it gradually became known as an object of meditation. The earliest forms of Chaitya were rectangular as are found at Junnar, the umbrella over the Dāgoba being carved on the actual flat roof of the cave. The flat roof was however early replaced by a semi-circular one and then a side aisle was cut all round. In the early caves the position of the pillars was studiously copied from the earlier wooden structures in which it had been necessary to set the pillars at a slight angle in order to overcome the thrust from the springing of the arched roof, and the pillars in the early caves at Ajanta and Bhāja are representative of this feature. When this semi-circular roof came into vogue and the Chaityas were built on a larger scale the lighting became a matter of paramount importance, and a special form of window was introduced which was peculiarly suitable

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for its requirements. It was necessary that the greatest amount of light should fall on the Dāgoba or altar on which the sacred relics were displayed to the congregation. The form of window is something like that of a horse shoe, but it contained a great deal of symbolic meaning; the interior of the pattern as may be seen represents the sun rising or "Dawn," the outside of the pattern originally probably representing the early thatched roof of a Bengal village hut took the shape of a conventionalised leaf of the sacred "pipal," the Bodhi tree under which Gautama had attained enlightenment. In the early period of Buddhism as practised by the puritanical Hināyāna sect no sculptures representing any form of deity except occasionally Lakshmī were ever to be found in the Chaityas or Vihāras. The Dāgoba was a plain cylinder surmounted by a dome or Garhba over which was placed the torān and umbrellas; this torān was in the form of a small box, which in some cases was hollowed out to form a recess to contain a relic, and over which was an abacus of five or six flat slabs, each one rather larger than the one below it. The only form of ornament to be found on these was the "rail pattern" which as mentioned before was more in the way of a copy of the original stūpa than anything else. In later times as idolatry crept into the teaching and the Buddha became worshipped as the deity, the Mahāyāna sect, which later came into being, allowed all forms of idolatry and embellished their Chaityas with sculptures of every kind, and on the front of the Dāgoba was carved the image of the Buddha in high relief.

VIHARAS. These were for the accommodation of Buddhist Bhikshus, or mendicant monks living together in communities. The earliest form of vihāra or monastery cave

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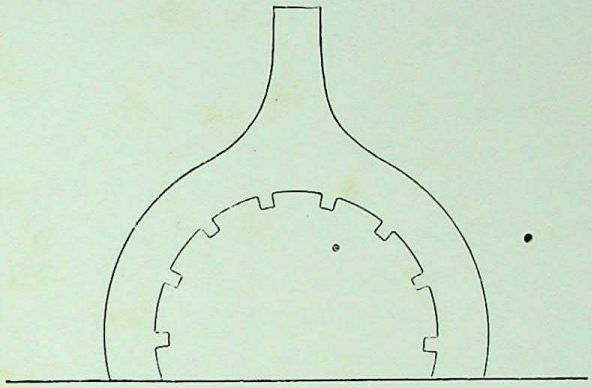
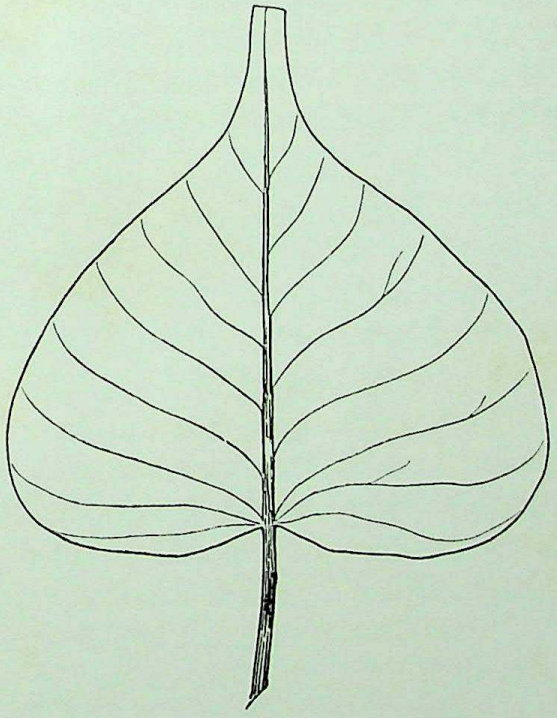


OUTLINE OF PIPAL LEAF. RISING SUN.
TYPICAL CHAITYA OR SUN WINDOW



LEAF OF THE PIPAL OR SACRED BODHI OR BO TREE.

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seems to have been that of one or more "grihas" or cells with a verandah (padasāla) or porch in front, this is exemplified in the Rāni ka Nur in the Udāyāgiri hills of Cuttack. In many instances the cells were small, in others they consisted of two apartments, the inner having a stone bench, as in several instances at Junnar. This bed is a constant feature of all the earlier cells, but disappears in those excavated after the second century after Christ. A permanent spring or stream of water close by, or a cistern ("pondhi") cut in the rock, usually beside or under the cell, was an indispensable accompaniment. The number of these cells at one place was often considerable.

PONDHIS or cisterns as just stated are almost invariable accompaniments of mendicants' cells and vihāras and are cut in the rock, usually near or at the entrance, and often extending partly under the caves. The water was brought to them by numerous small runnels cut in the rock, by which it was carried over the façade of the cave and otherwise collected from the surface of the hill in which the excavations occur. The entrance to the cistern is usually by a square opening in the floor of a small recess, on the back wall of the recess, or on the face of the rock over it, is frequently an inscription.

The next step in Western India was to introduce a square hall for assembling in, probably copied from some wooden structural erection that existed before any rock-cut excavations were attempted, and often used as a school, this must have been a very early accompaniment of every group of Bhikshu-grihas or monks' cells. At first this room perhaps had no cells, but it would be evident that the walls of a large hall offered special facilities for excavating cells all round

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it, and for purposes of worship, a large cell was afterwards cut out in the back wall, containing a Dāgoba to serve in the place of a separate chapel, or a Dāgoba was carved in bas-relief on the back wall as at Nāsik in the Gautamiputra and Nāhapāna vihāras. At first, too, the smaller halls or sailagrinas were formed without pillars to support the roof, the tenacity of the rock being assumed to dispense with the necessity of any prop between the side walls. Afterwards, however, when the size was increased it was found that this was unsafe, and that owing to flaws and veins large areas of roofing, if left unsupported, were liable to fall in. Pillars were then resorted to, as in the ordinary wooden building of the country, arranged either in rows running round the sailas or halls, separating the central square area from the aisles, or disposed in equidistant lines, as in cave XI at Ajanta, and probably in the vihāra at Pitalkhora.

Little sculpture was at first employed in any of the caves, but in later examples the pillars came to be elaborately carved and though Gautama was averse to idol worship, in the course of time he himself was represented in various attitudes or "Mudras" in sculptures in all parts of the caves, while in still later times when the Mahāyāna sect became popular and influential other beings were associated with him first as attendants, and then as distinct and separate objects of adoration, such were the Indras, Bodhisattwas, Padmapāni, and Manjusri.

This idolatry appears at first sight to be quite antagonistic to the principles taught by their great sage for Buddha had emptied the heavens, he made man his own saviour; moreover, he having entered Nirvāna can no more hear or be in any way influenced by the worship of his

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followers, but they hold that this does not in any way detract from the efficiency of the service, for the act is in itself an *opus operatum*, and that as the seed germinates when it is put into the earth without any consciousness on the part of the elements relative to the vivifying influence they exercise, so does merit arise from the worship of the images of Buddha, though the being they represent is unconscious of the deed. And this merit is, in like manner, spontaneously and without the intervention of any intelligent agent, productive of prosperity and peace. For the same reason they worship the Bodhi or Bo tree, under which he attained to Buddhahood, and the relics of the sage and of his disciples, enshrined in Dāgobas, etc.

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CHAPTER III.

SOME MEANINGS OF THE SYMBOLS.

It must not be imagined that the carvings and images were merely haphazard or the invention of particular individuals. In most cases they were carefully worked-out symbols derived from earlier Vedic or Aryan ideas. The stories depicted in sculpture were chiefly those taken from the Jātakas, or stories of Buddha's earlier lives as recited by him after his attainment to enlightenment. The embellishments and ornamentations of pillars all had symbolic meanings which have probably been more misunderstood than any other works in Buddhistic architecture. The ordinary square shaft denoted in the original religion Brāhma, the creator, but when translated into Buddhist terminology, Buddha. The octagonal shaft represented Vishnu and the Sangha or Buddhist brotherhood, and the sixteen-sided one, Rudra the Destroyer or Dharma the Law; the circular pillar was dedicated to Chandra the Moon. In the base and capitals of these pillars the fruit of the lotus plays a great part. That the symbol of the lotus entered very much into the religion of Buddhists may be gathered from the chief incantation during the "pradakshina" or circumambulation of the Chaitya when they solemnly marched round chanting "Om māne padme hum" which translated means "Oh the Jewel in the Lotus." The base of the pillar was usually represented by Lakshmī's bowl of plenty, this was derived from

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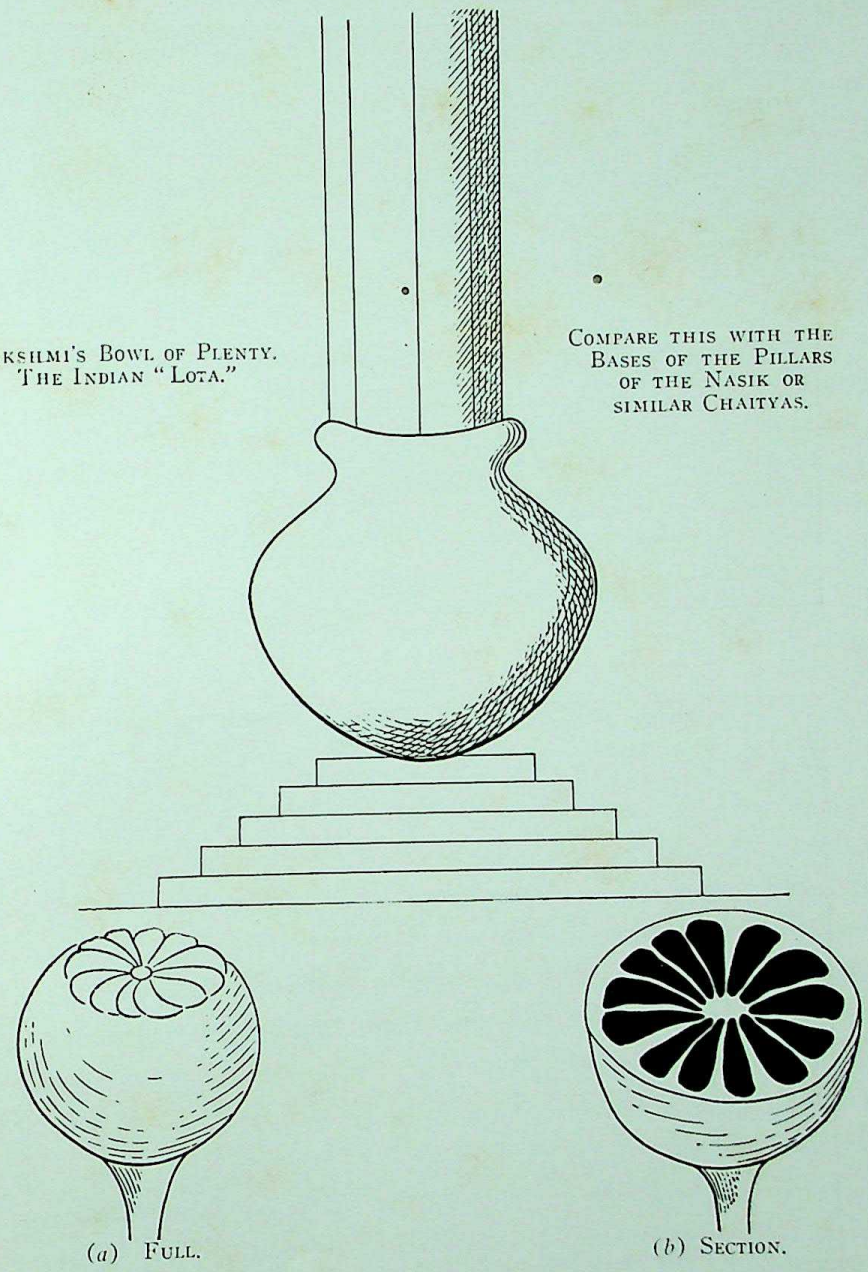

FRUIT OF THE BLUE LOTUS.

SHOWING THE DERIVATION AND SIMILARITY OF LAKSHMI'S BOWL OF PLENTY AND THE SYMBOL OF THE WHEEL BOTH ON THE EXTERIOR AND IN THE SECTION.

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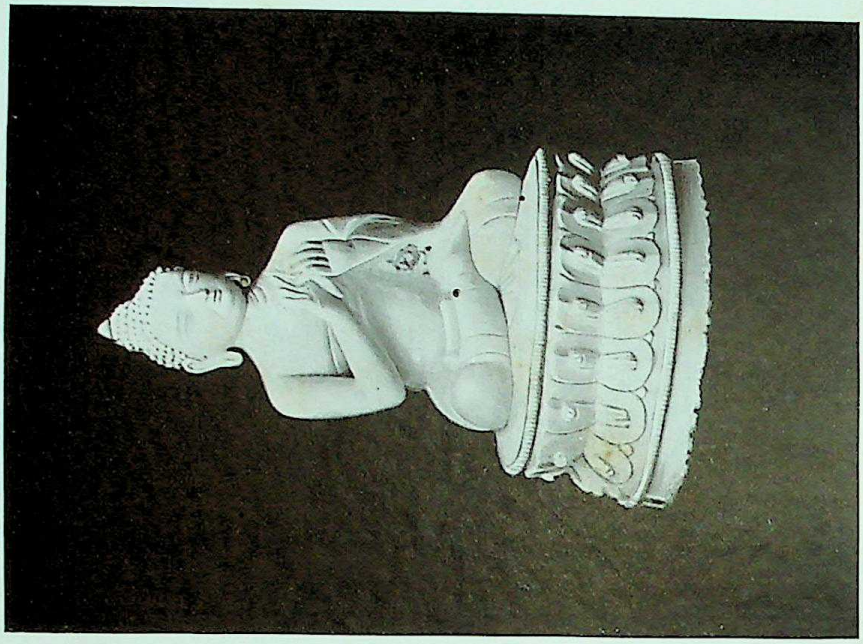
PLATE III.



DHARMA-CHAKRA MUDRA.

LAKSHMI, FROM A PANEL AT SANCHI.

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the shape of the fruit of the blue lotus or more strictly the water-lily (Nymphaea) dedicated to the mid-day sun and also that of the white Nymphaea, the flower of the moonlight sky, opening by night. It was the jar which contained the amrita, or elixir of immortality, the nectar of the gods, and thus its form was adapted not only to the sacrificial vessels, but to the ordinary Indian domestic water-pot the "Lota." The section of the water-lily fruit given shows how its symbolic meaning was associated with form as well as colour for within it is the mystic wheel containing the seed of life which was scattered over the waters in which it grows. Equally well adaptable was the form of the fruit of the Nelumbium, the sacred lotus of Egypt, for the capital as that of the blue lotus for the base. Nelumbium has always been regarded as the symbol of the throne and footstool of the gods especially that of Brāhma the Creator or the rising sun. The petals were turned down over the shaft in many cases and in this form exposed the fruit, just as the rosy petals in nature opening at the first flush of morning light were symbolic of the robes of Ushas, the Dawn Maiden, who flung open the doors of the sky. In Asokan sculpture the lotus flower is very frequently represented in the form of rosettes with the petals turned down, so as to disclose the fruit or seed-vessel, which has a special symbolic significance as the Hirānya-garbha, or womb of the Universe.

There were four main events in the life of Buddha, each with their own separate representations. In the first we have Lakshmī, the Dawn Maiden, representing the nativity. She rises from the cosmic ocean standing upon Brāhma's lotus flower and two elephants, symbols of the rain-cloud or monsoon, pour lustrations over her. The second event in the Buddhist sacred cycle was the attainment of "enlightenment" which is represented

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by the Bodhi tree under which he attained to this state. The third event was the preaching of the first sermon at Benāres denoted by the Chakra or wheel of the law. The wheel as an ancient Vedic symbol representing the sun naturally appealed to those of the new faith, which was to shine forth like the great luminary with equal splendour over the world. The last and final event was the death of Buddha, and this is naturally represented by the Stūpa, Dāgoba or Chaitya, the funeral pile.

The representations of Buddha are not without their significance and there are three main attitudes or "Mudras" in which he is depicted. They are to be found in many of the caves of Western India, but probably in none earlier than the fourth or fifth century, unless they have been introduced some time after the original excavation. The most usual attitude of the great teacher is that in which he is represented as seated on a throne, the corners of which are upheld by two lions and consequently known as the "Sinhasan" or "lion-seat," with his feet on a lotus blossom and his hands in front of his breast holding the little finger of the left hand between the thumb and forefinger of the right. This is known as the Dharma-Chakra Mudra, or attitude of "turning the wheel of the law," that is of teaching. Modifications of this attitude are known when he is represented standing or with his legs doubled up under him, but with the hands as described above.

The next most common attitude of Buddha is that in which the Jaina Tīrthankaras are always represented, *viz.*, with their legs doubled under them in a squatting attitude, and the hands laid one on the other over the feet with the palms turned upwards. This position of "meditative absorption" is called the Jiāna or Dhyāna Mudra. The Jaina Tīrthankaras can always be distinguished by the fact that they have both on the palm

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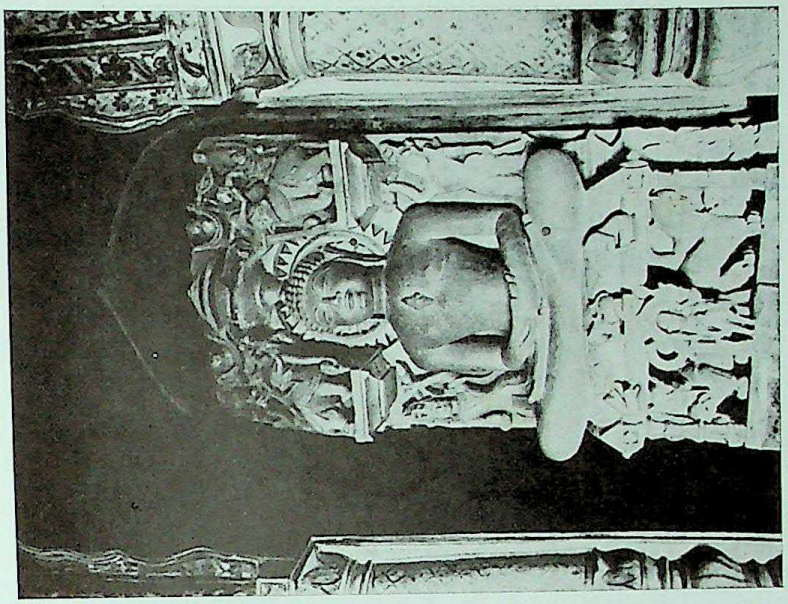

JAINA TIRTHANKARA.

DHYANA MUDRA.

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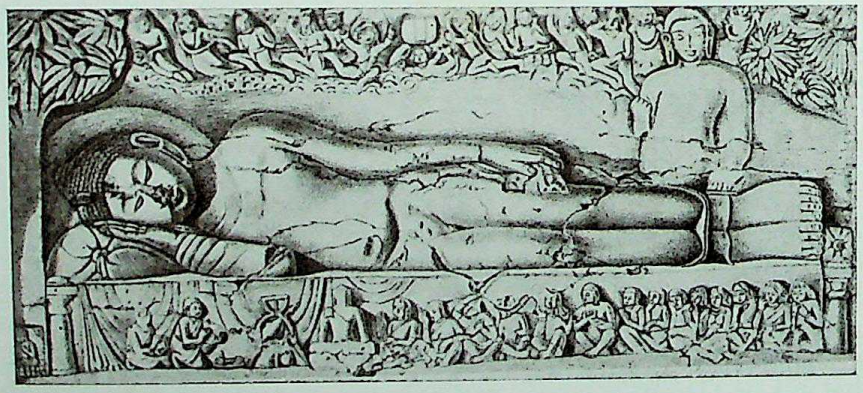
PLATE V.

BHUMI-SPARSA MUDRA.



NIRVANA.

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of the hand and on the chest a small diamond shaped figure. A third attitude in which he is sometimes represented, as when under the Bodhi tree, where he is said to have attained to Buddhahood is called the Vajrāsāna or Bhumi-sparsa Mudra, when the left hand lies on the upturned soles of the feet, and the right resting over the knee points to the earth. He is also figured on the walls standing with the alms bowl of the Bhikshu or mendicant, or lastly, resting on his right side with head to the north, in the attitude he is said to have lain at his death. Behind the head is often represented a nimbus (Bhāmandāla), or aureole, as in mediæval figures of the saints. This occurs in the earliest sculptured and painted figures of Buddha.

On each side of the principal image we usually find attendants standing with chauris or fly flaps in their hands. These are varied in different sculptures, in some they are Sākras or Indras with high regal head-dresses, in others, Padmapāni holding a lotus by the stalk is on one side, his hair in the Jāta or head-dress of a Bhikshu, and Manjusri or Vajrapāni, another Bodhisattwa, on the other.

On the front of the throne is usually sculptured the Chakra, or wheel, turned edgewise to the spectator with a deer couchant on each side of it, representing the deer park at Benāres where the first sermon was preached. Sometimes behind the deer are a number of kneeling worshippers on each side. In more modern reliefs Buddha is often represented seated on a lotus, the stalk of which is upheld by Nāga figures, people whose heads are canopied by the hoods, usually five, of a cobra. In earliest times the lion as a sun emblem was the guardian of all four quarters and became the vahān and throne symbol of the Buddha to signify his world-wide domination and the glory of his spiritual conquest. In the same way the elephant was Indra's

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rain-cloud and the guardian of the south whence the rushing monsoon winds carry Lakshmī's nectar upon their wings. The horse, which was the animal upon which the Aryan warriors had entered India and enabled them to conquer their more inferior neighbours, was the guardian of the northern quarter whence they had arrived. • The bull, the sacrificial animal, the vahān of Siva, guarded the western quarter or the gate of the setting sun, the darkening of the light of day.

The duck which is to be found in many paintings and carvings is said to symbolise the missionary propensities of the early Buddhist teachers. As the duck gathers together at certain definite places and at certain definite times of the year, and again migrates to distant countries, so the early Buddhist teachers gathered together at their centres during the rainy seasons, and annually migrated on their travels to propagate the gospel of Buddhism to the world.

To what has already been said respecting Buddhism generally it may here be added that the Buddhists are divided into two sects, the Hināyāna and Mahāyāna or of the Lesser and Greater Vehicle. The original or Puritan Buddhists belong to the Hināyāna or Lesser Vehicle, whose religion consisted in the practice of morality and a few simple ceremonial observances. The thirteenth patriarch, Nāgarjūna, a native of Berar, who lived 400, or according to others 500, years after Buddha, was the founder of the new school of the Mahāyāna, which soon became very popular in the Deccan, thanks to the reassertion of Brāhmanism. It taught an abstruse mystical theology which speedily developed a mythology in which Buddha was pushed into the background by female personifications of Dharma or the Prājana Paramīta, and other goddesses or saktis, by Jinatmaka Buddhas, or forms of the senses, etc. From all this, as might

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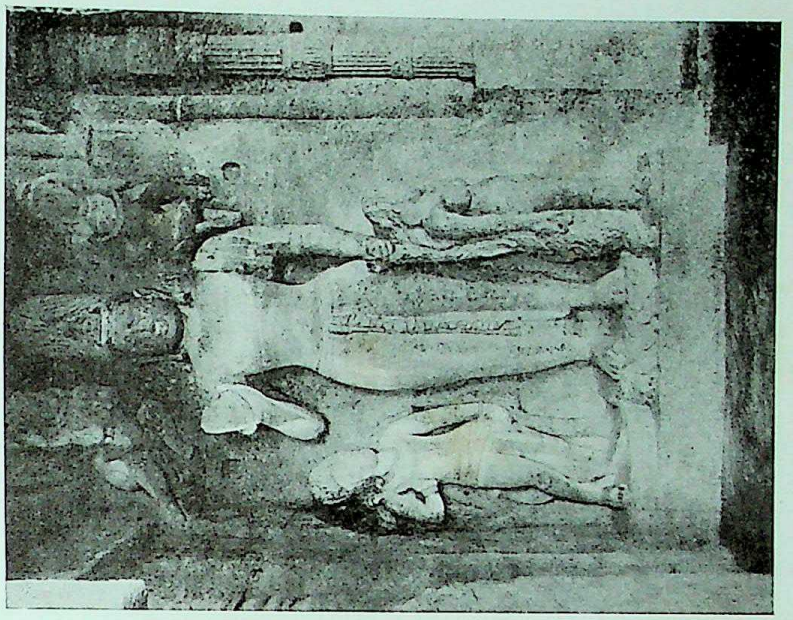
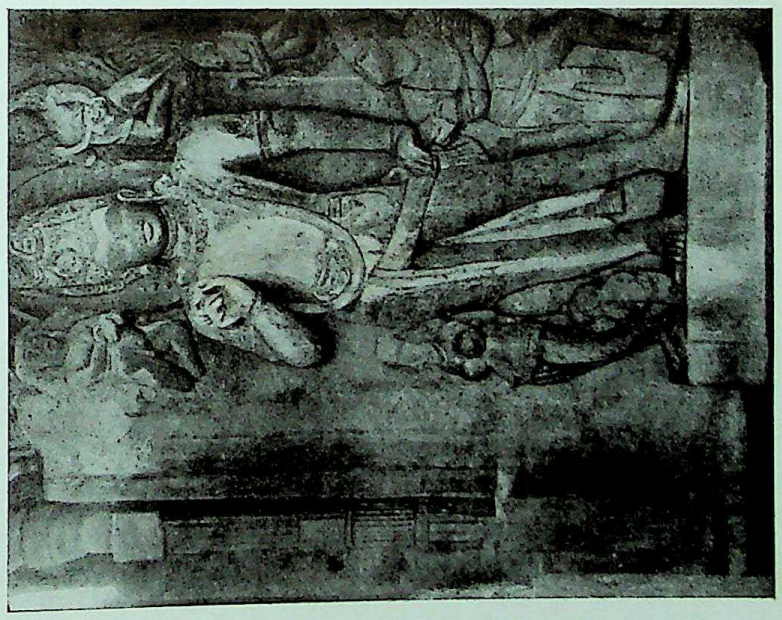


THE BODHISATTWA PADMAPANI.



THE BODHISATTWA VAJRAPANI.

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be expected, we find a very considerable difference between the sculptures of the cave temples of the earlier and later periods of Buddhism. This, however, does not become marked very early, and it is only after the fifth century A.D. that we have any very decidedly Mahāyānist sculptures, as in the later caves at Ajanta, Ellora, Aurangābād and in one cave at Nāsik.

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CHAPTER IV.

CHRONOLOGY AND GROUPING OF THE CAVES.

It must be remembered that in almost all the groups of Buddhist caves the work has grown gradually and in many cases has proceeded over a period of some centuries. It is, therefore, not practical to group these definitely chronologically. The procedure in this book has therefore been to group them more or less geographically and to a certain extent we are fortunate in that these groups do arrange themselves more or less in chronological order. The first and earliest caves are probably those in the east of India, the small series near Gāya consisting of the Barābar and Rājgir groups probably dating to the time of Asoka. These are closely followed by the caves in Cuttack at Udāyāgiri and Khondagiri which must be placed at about 250 B.C. to the beginning of the Christian era. Those in the extreme west in the Kathiāwār peninsula, *viz.*, at Junagarh, Talāja and Sāna are next in order. We then come to that group of caves which lies to the east of Bombay and which may be classified as the Borghāt group; this consists of Bhāja, Kondāne now almost completely in ruins, Bedsa and Karli, which cover a period from about 150 B.C. to A.D. 100. To the north of these are those of Junnar and Nāsik with a period of 100 B.C. to A.D. 250, those at Junnar being the older. With this group we may include the small group at Pitalkhora and the earlier ones at Ajanta, but Ajanta being such an important series the whole will be treated together. The next section includes those in the island of

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Salsette, *viz.*, Kānheri, Mahakhel, and the earliest Buddhist caves at Elephanta. It must be remembered, however, that those at Kānheri cover a very long period and the latest ones of this series are of the Mahāyāna sect and may be as late as A.D. 700.

The small group of caves in Malwa, near the village of Bāgh, may be dated about A.D. 300 and was originally of the purely Hināyāna sect.

The more recent series of Buddhist caves belong to the Mahāyāna sect and extends from the fourth to nearly eighth century A.D. and comprise the following groups. The magnificent series at Ajanta, the latter members of which were excavated from A.D. 250 to 650 or, perhaps even later, and a small group about 9 miles to the west of Ajanta near the village of Ginjāla at Ghartotcutch, which date from about A.D. 500 to 600, the Buddhist caves at Ellora which range from A.D. 450 to 700, and three small groups at Aurangābād which principally belong to the seventh century A.D. In Kathiāwār there is also a group near the village of Dhank which may be dated about A.D. 700 and one cave at Junagarh in the Uparkot fort is probably about A.D. 300. The periods given for the excavations must, however, be taken only as approximate periods for the original excavations for, in many cases, there are obvious signs that the later Mahāyāna sect had continued occupation in caves originally excavated by the Hināyāna sect and had carved sculptures of their own school including images of the Buddha which were taboo in the earlier period. Besides the caves to be described later it must also be remembered that there are small minor and isolated groups which have not been included chiefly owing to the fact that they have no special architectural features. Among these may be mentioned here a number of groups in the Konkan and Deccan, all to the south

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of Bombay and bearing a general character of small plain dwellings for bhikshus with flat-roofed shrines for the Dāgoba and vihāras. The chief groups in the Konkan are those at Kuda in the neighbourhood of Mahād and those in the Deccan are chiefly at Karod, about 30 miles south of Sātāra, Wai and Sirvala, north of same town. These range perhaps from 200 B.C. to A.D. 50. Another group at Damner and Kholvi, north of Ujjain, in Gwalior State, must extend to the time of A.D. 700 at least if not even later.

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CHAPTER V.

THE MAURYAN CAVES OF BIHAR.

BARABAR AND RAJGIR.

THE great series of Indian cave temples begins with the group of Mauryan caves situated in the Nāgarjūni and Barābar Hills in Bihar, some sixteen miles north of Gāya. These hills consist of two narrow parallel ridges, about half a mile distant from each other, the rock being a close-grained granite. In the hollow ground between the ridges are two small lakes, the scene of an annual fair. The caves which are collectively known as the Sāt Ghara (seven houses) are divided into two groups, the four southernmost in the Bārabar group being the older.

The Karna Kauper cave is situated in the north face of the ridge. It is a plain rectangular hall, 33 feet 6 inches in length, 14 feet in breadth. The height of the walls is 6 feet 1 inch, and the vaulted roof 4 feet 8 inches above them. The entrance faces north, the length of the cave running east and west parallel to the face of the rock. The larger caves of this group are all planned on the same principle, it being left for later generations to strike the axis of the hall boldly into the rock at right angles to its face. At the western end of the cave is a raised platform, 7 feet 6 inches long by 2 feet 6 inches broad and 1 foot 3 inches high, the chair, table and bed combined of the ascetic's cell. Both walls and roof are brightly polished throughout. Outside to the right of the

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door is the dedicatory inscription. In five lines of deeply cut characters, it records the bestowal of the cave by Asoka in his nineteenth year.

The Sudama (Nyagrodha) cave is hewn in the same granite ridge, but directly opposite the Karna, and therefore faces south. The doorway is deeply inset and the jambs have a considerable inclination inwards. To the left of it there is an inscription of two lines recording the bestowal of the cave on the Ajīvikas by Asoka in his twelfth year.

The exact meaning of "Ajīvika" is not clear. It was applied to the disciples of the heretic Gosāla, who was contemporary with both Mahāvīra and Gautama.

An attempt has been made to obliterate this, but the depth of the letters renders it still legible. The cave is divided into two, the outer chamber being oblong. It is 32 feet 9 inches long, 19 feet 6 inches broad, and the vaulted roof rises 5 feet 6 inches above the walls which are 6 feet 9 inches high. The inner chamber is circular, with an hemispherical-domed roof. The dividing wall follows the lines of this inner chamber and is circular; it has curious overhanging false eaves in imitation of thatch, at the opposite end of the outer chamber there is a small, obviously unfinished, niche cut in the wall. Walls and roof are polished everywhere except where this addition has been begun.

The Lomas Rishi cave is very like the Sudama, but is unfinished, the project having been abandoned because of a flaw in the rock. The side walls of the outer chamber are dressed and polished, but the outer wall of the inner chamber has been dressed only. The inside of the inner chamber has been left absolutely rough, the cessation of work probably being due to a fissure in the roof. The entrance, however, is

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MAURYAN CAVES.

LOMAS RISHI. BARABAR GROUP.

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finished and has been acclaimed as the earliest example of the rock cut "Chaitya Hall" which grew to such huge dimensions in later times. It is obviously a fairly close representation of the face of a structural Chaitya hall. Longitudinal rafters are supported by massive posts inclined slightly inwards. Over the rafters is the curved roof which seems to be a triple one consisting of longitudinal planks. Fergusson suggested that the outer covering was of metal, but this is not likely. Its form is a pointed ogee arch. The door jambs follow the line of the side-posts and slope inwards. Over the entrance is a semi-circular panel sculptured in low relief with a frieze of elephants, above which is apparently a representation of an open framework.

The fourth cave of the Barābar group is the Visva Jhopri. It consists of two chambers and is also unfinished. On the right hand wall of the outer chamber is an inscription recording the bestowal of the cave by Asoka in his twelfth year. The outer portion is a verandah rather than a chamber; there are socket holes in the floor to take some kind of timber frame work.

The most important of the Nāgarjūni group is the Gopika (the Milkmaids' Cave). It is 40 feet 5 inches long and 19 feet 2 inches broad, both ends being semi-circular. The walls are 6 feet 6 inches and the vaulted roof has a rise of 4 feet. Immediately over the doorway, the jambs of which slope inwards, is a small panel containing an inscription of four lines recording the dedication of the cave to the Ajīvikas by Dasaratha on his succession to the throne. The remaining caves, known as the Vahiyāka and the Vadthika, are small and of no special interest. They both bear inscriptions of Dasaratha.*

* Ancient India. Codrington. Pp. 19-20.

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CHAPTER VI.

CAVES IN CUTTACK.

UDAYAGIRI AND KHONDAGIRI.

SITUATED 17 miles nearly south of Cuttack and 4 miles to the north-west of Bhubaneshwar, which is the nearest railway station, and about 8 miles distant, are two hills one on each side of the road, known as the Udāyāgiri and Khondagiri hills. In each of these hills and quite close to the road are groups of caves. These caves are more like those in Kathiāwār than any others in India; they resemble the ones at Junagarh in the way that they are not built on the scarp of the hill but only sufficient of the top of the hill has been left to form the roof, thus avoiding any undue weight overhead. There are no big vihāras amongst them and not a single Dāgoba. They mostly consist of single cells or verandahs with cells opening on to them. Some of these as the Rāni ka Nur are double storeyed and of considerable size. They differ from those in Kathiāwār in that they have been highly embellished with sculptures but are strictly of the Hināyāna sect and no image of the Buddha himself is to be found amongst all the carvings. Whether the carvings are scenes from the Jātakas it is difficult to say as there are no inscriptions to guide us as is the case of those at Bharhut, but so far they have not been connected with them. There are no inscriptions which directly lead us to the date of these caves, but there are many other points from which we can assume dates with fair accuracy. It is true

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about one half of the caves at Udāyāgiri do bear inscriptions, but none of them have dates, and none of the names found in them have yet been identified with those of any king who figures in any of our lists. What they do tell us, however, from the form of the characters employed, is that all the inscribed caves are anterior to the first century B.C. There is historical evidence to show that from a period vaguely contemporary with Buddha till the fifth century A.D., *i.e.*, for nearly a thousand years, the country was exposed to frequent and nearly continuous invasions of Yāvanas from the north-west. It is now generally considered that the Yāvanas were of Greek origin and at that time was certainly understood as designating all who, from an Indian point of view, could be regarded as foreigners or outside barbarians. It is possible that Buddhism was brought into the province of Orissa long before the time of Asoka and consequently before the first rock-cut temples were excavated. Images of the Yāvana warriors are to be found in the Rāni ka Nur.

The sculptures in the Ananta cave are so similar to those of the Bharhut Stūpa, whose date is known, that we may take them to be almost contemporary. About 6 miles south-east of these hills, near the village of Dhauli, are the Aswatama rocks on which Asoka chose about 250 B.C. to engrave one of the most complete and perfect sets of his series of edicts, and he hardly would have chosen so remote a corner of his dominions for this purpose, had the place not possessed some previous sanctity in the eyes of his co-religionists. What were the exact reasons for the sanctity of this neighbourhood and the attractions which drew the Buddhist hermits to select their abode in these hills we will probably never be able to ascertain with accuracy. It is believed that the site of the city of Dantapuri in which the celebrated Tooth Relic was enshrined until it was carried off to Ceylon in

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the fourth century A.D. was somewhere in the neighbourhood. It was certainly not far from this and may have been in the immediate vicinity of the caves, though the evidence, at present to hand, seems to favour the idea that it was at Puri where the famous temple of Jagannāth now stands, some 30 miles south of the caves. There is no record of the Buddha himself ever having visited these parts.

Over the front of a large natural cavern known as the Hāthi Gumpha is a long inscription of 17 lines. For several reasons Fergusson and Babu Rajendralāla Mitra have come to the conclusion that this inscription dated from about 300 to 325 B.C. As it is avowedly the earliest thing here it is probable that all the caves that show marks of the chisel are more modern and must be of a later date. It cannot be said definitely whether the Hāthi Gumpha was ever occupied as a dwelling by early Buddhist ascetics, but Fergusson in his "Cave Temples of India" says "The important lessons we are taught by the peculiarities of the Hāthi Gumpha are the same that can be gathered from the examination of the caves in Bihar. It is that all the caves used by the Buddhists, or held sacred by them anterior to the age of Asoka, are mere natural caverns unimproved by art. With his reign the fashion of chiselling cells out of the living rock commenced and was continued with continually increasing magnificence and elaboration for nearly 1,000 years after his time." Though with the later knowledge which has come to hand since Fergusson wrote his monumental works, many of his statements and classifications of architecture have been proved to be in error, there is no reason to doubt his word in this and other of his historical allusions.

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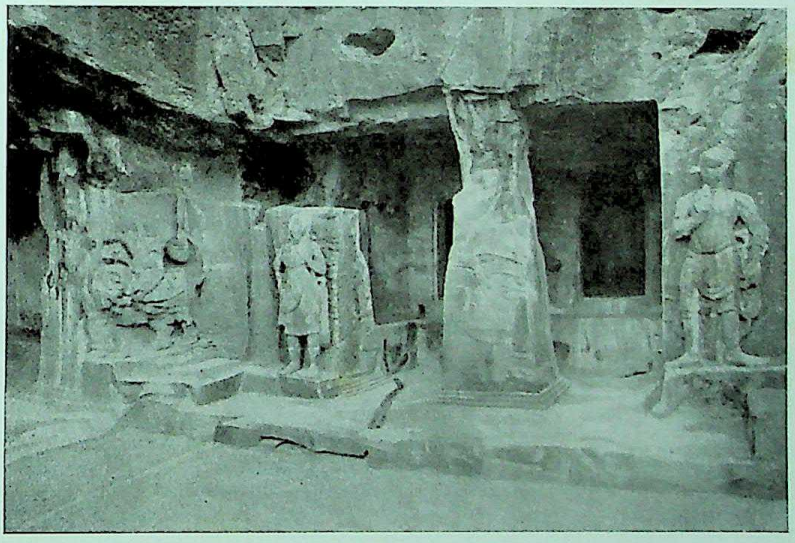
THE RANI KA NUR FROM S. E.



YAVANA WARRIORS IN THE RANI KA NUR
CAVES IN THE UDAYAGIRI HILL.

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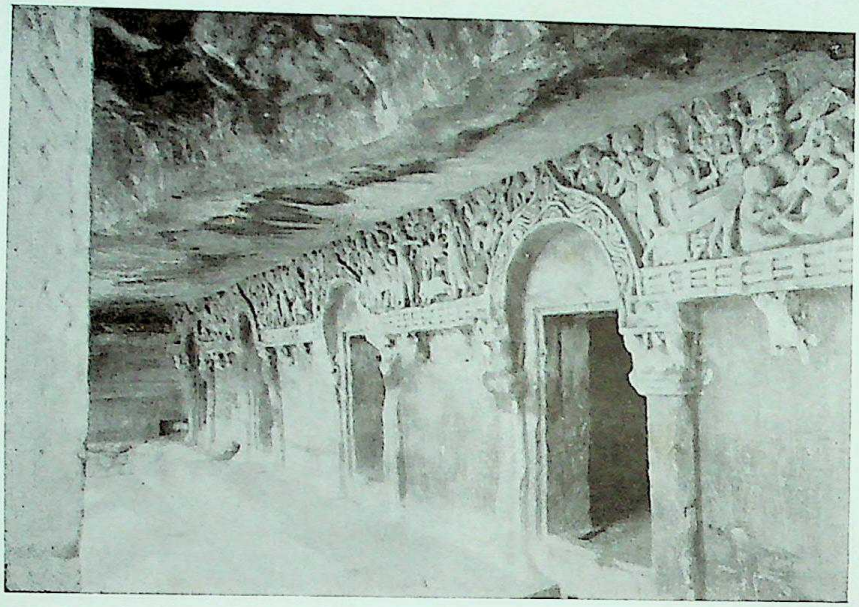
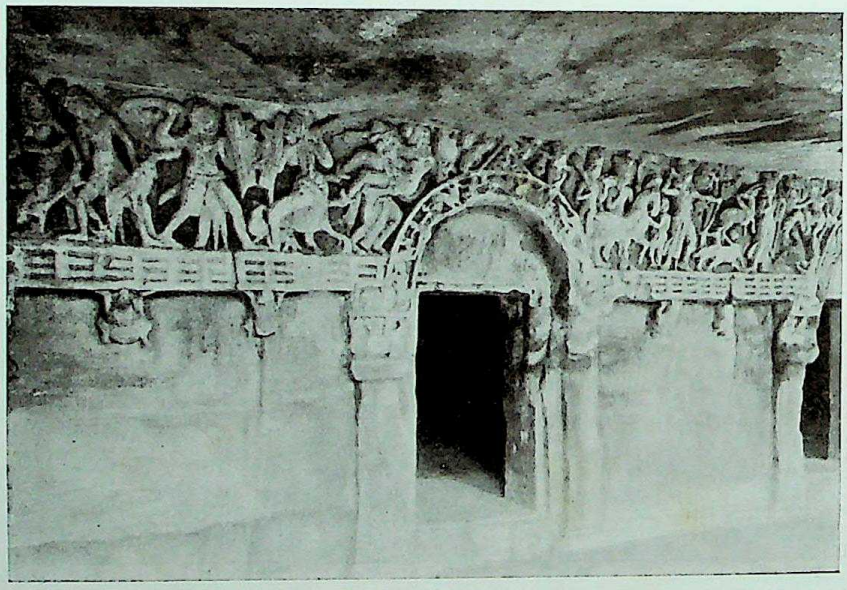
PLATE IX.

CUTTACK.



SCULPTURES IN THE UPPER VERANDAH OF THE RANI KA NUR.



THE ABDUCTION SCENE IN THE RANI KA NUR.

CAVES IN THE UDAYAGIRI HILL.

[*Facing page 27*]

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THE UDAYAGIRI CAVES.

The Udāyāgiri group of caves may be assigned to the Buddhist faith. The largest of these the Rāni ka Nur, or Queen's palace, consists of two verandahs one above the other with a fore-court in front bounded on each side by small cells. Owing to the configuration of the hill the verandahs are not perpendicularly over each other, but the roof of the cells of the lower series forms a narrow open space in front of the upper storey. In front of the lower series of cells was probably originally an extra structural roof of wood to give greater shelter to the cells behind. This has entirely disappeared now, but from slots and other marks on the rock it is evident that something of this sort had been erected. Owing to the destruction of this extra verandah the sculptures in front of the lower cells have now got so weathered and eroded that it is impossible to make out their original form. Those, however, in the upper verandah having been well protected are in a fairly good state of preservation even at the present time. There is an almost total absence of all Buddhistic symbols or objects of worship such as we find in the Vaikuntha cave in the same group, and the Ananta in the Kondagiri group close by. In fact there is nothing essentially Buddhistic about this cave, but if this is so, it is equally certain that there is nothing that savours of the Brāhmanical and other religions; and we are almost forced to assume that the scenes depicted, if not from the Jātakas, are from events occurring among the local traditions of Orissa. This latter conclusion is however very problematical. The most interesting scene depicted in the sculptures is an abduction scene which has been repeated again in the Ganesa Gumpha to be described next, but in a very different style of

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sculpture. It is possible also that the scene round the doorway of cave No. 3 at Nāsik may allude to the same story, the origin of which is however not known. The illustrations give a good idea, and better than any description, of these sculptures. At the east end of the upper verandah are some small cells facing west in front of which are sculptured figures of Yāvana warriors. These are unknown in any other caves except at Bhāja, but very similar sculptures are to be found at Sānchi.

Further up the hill and not far from the Rāni ka Nur is the Ganesa Gumpha cave, the name being derived from two elephants holding lotus buds in their trunks, who flank on either side steps leading up to the verandah. It is a small cave divided into two cells but the sculptures in the verandah are of interest, the abduction scene of the Rāni ka Nur being duplicated here and the flying capitals of the pillars being a high form of sculpture also found in other caves of this group.

Proceeding along the pathway from the Ganesa Gumpha and dropping a little to the right, we arrive at the Hāthi Gumpha cave, which, as stated above, contains a long inscription, but is itself merely a natural cavern. In order to protect the inscription, pillars and a façade have been erected in recent times in front of this cave. This group consists entirely of small single cells chiefly cut out of large boulders. One is known as the Sarpa, or Serpent cave, from the image of a large Nāga over the cell door. Further up the hill at a short distance is a cave again cut out of a large boulder, unique in the whole series of Buddhist architecture. The boulder has been fashioned into the head of a tiger, the mouth being wide open and the roof of the mouth forming a verandah in front of the cell door which is situated where the gullet of the animal would naturally be. This is known as the Bāgh, or Tiger cave. Some of the boulders further up the hill show signs that

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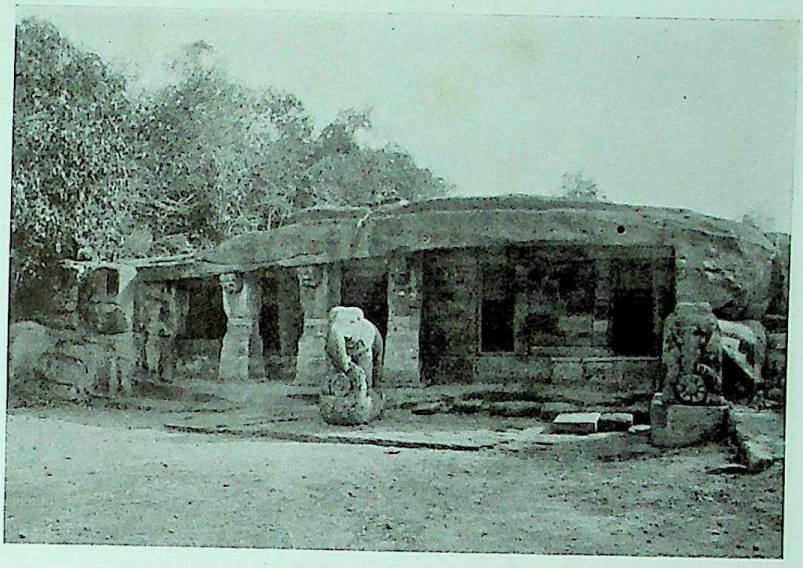
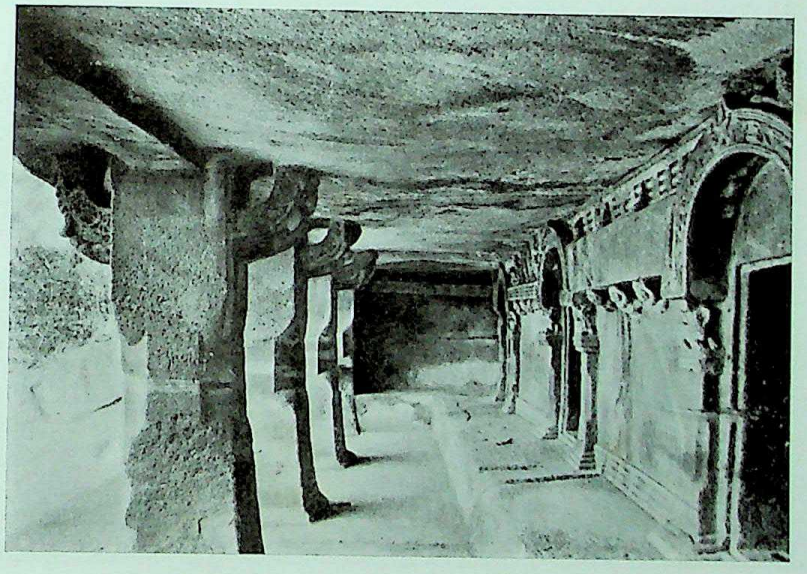
CUTTACK.



THE GANESA GUMPHA.



VERANDAH OF THE GANESA GUMPHA.

CAVES IN THE UDAYAGIRI HILL

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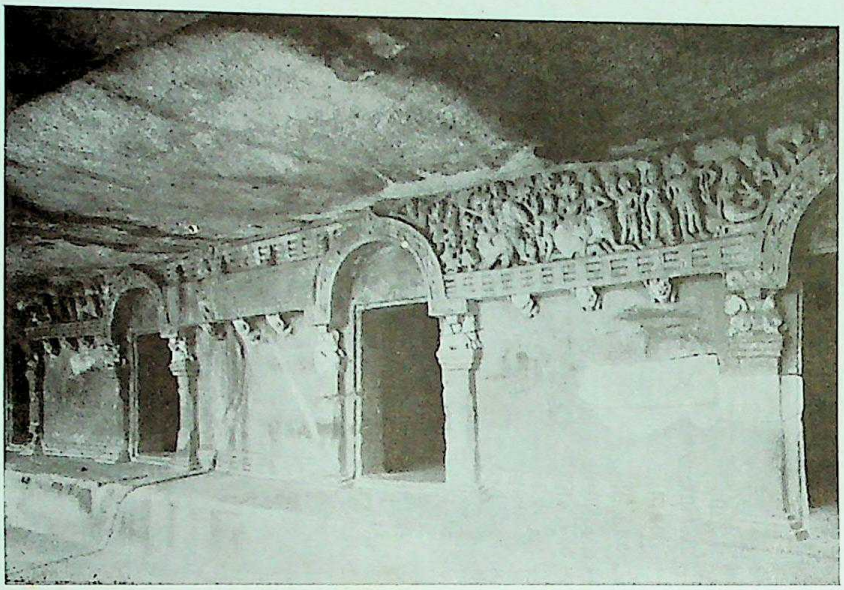
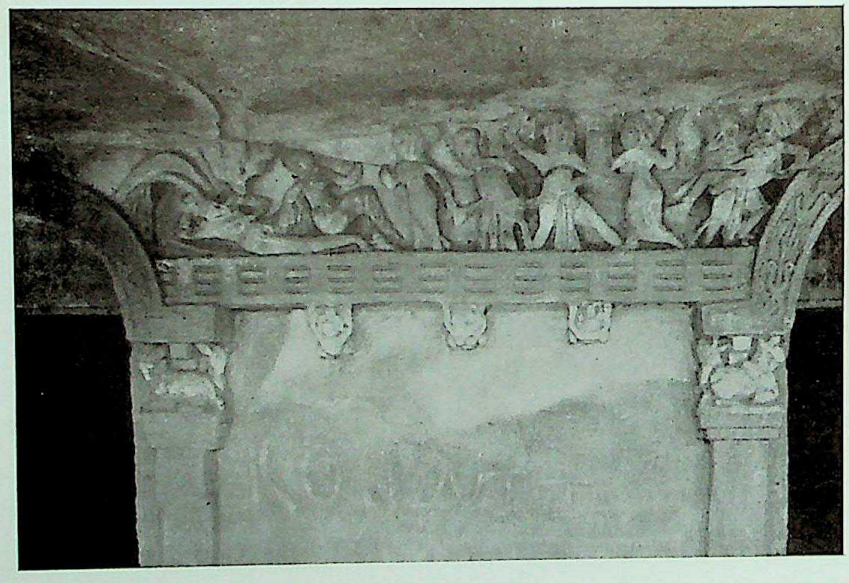
PLATE XI.

CUTTACK.



SCULPTURES IN THE GANESA GUMPHA.



THE ABDUCTION SCENE IN THE GANESA GUMPHA

CAVES IN THE UDAYAGIRI HILL.

[*Facing page 29*]

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they have been also cut into some sort of similar form but they have been so broken and weathered that they have become unrecognisable. Returning past the Hāthi Gumpha towards the road we arrive at a double-storeyed vihāra, the upper storey of which is known as the Vaikuntha and the lower storey bears the names of Pātalapura and Yomanapura. Though small and comparatively unadorned it is interesting as being the prototype of the largest and finest cave of the series, the Rāni ka Nur, or Queen's palace, already described. There are inscriptions in these caves assigning them to various kings or lords of Kalinga, but as none of the names can be recognised as found elsewhere they do not help us in our endeavours to ascertain its age. The balustrade of the upper storey is ornamented with the "Buddhist rail pattern."

The last caves to be described on this hill are known as the Jāya-Vijāya and Swargapuri caves. The former of these is of two storeys, the upper storey being perpendicularly over the other and is reached by a flight of stairs. The sculptures in this cave have the symbol of the Bo tree and are of a more advanced type than that found in the Ananta cave and more nearly resembles that found at Sānchi than anything to be found at Bharhut. Attached to this cave, on the right hand when facing it, is the Swargapuri cave. It has a plain but handsome façade, that apparently was never covered by a verandah. To the right of the doorway and fairly high up is a sculpture representing two elephants approaching from a forest represented by a single well sculptured tree, and apparently originally a similar group existed on the left, but the rock here has perished and fallen away and only one elephant now is visible. There is no inscription found on any part of this group of caves and it is only from the character of the sculptures that

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their age may be determined. They, however, show clearly that they are more modern than those in the Ananta and it is probable that their date cannot be far from the beginning of the first century A.D.

THE KONDAGIRI CAVES.

On the west of the road is the Kondagiri hill. Near the foot and visible from the road are a few small single cells excavated in the sandstone rock which has weathered very considerably. The most interesting cave in this group and a little higher up the hill is the one known as the Ananta cave. It is only a small cave, the verandah of which measures 27 feet on its inner side, and is only 5 feet in width. The character of its sculpture and architectural ornaments being nearly identical with those of the Bharhut Stūpa, it may be considered to be contemporary with that structure and may be dated as between 200 B.C. and 150 B.C. Another feature showing its early construction is the fact that the jambs of the doors slope inwards a feature also to be found in the caves of Bihar, which are known from inscriptions to be of a very early date. Part of the sculpture owing to the wall between the cell and the verandah having given way has been destroyed, but over the doors which remain there are semi-circular tympanæ which are adorned with sculptures. In one is the Bo tree, one of the most common features of Buddhist ornaments, and in the other is the image of the goddess Srī or Lakshmī which occurs at least ten times at Sānchi in exactly the same attitude, namely, standing on a lotus with two elephants on lotuses pouring water over her. She also occurs in a precisely similar form on a medallion on the Bharhut rail. As far as is known she is the only "person" ever worshipped by the Buddhists before the Christian era, the reason for this has been already explained. The pilasters that

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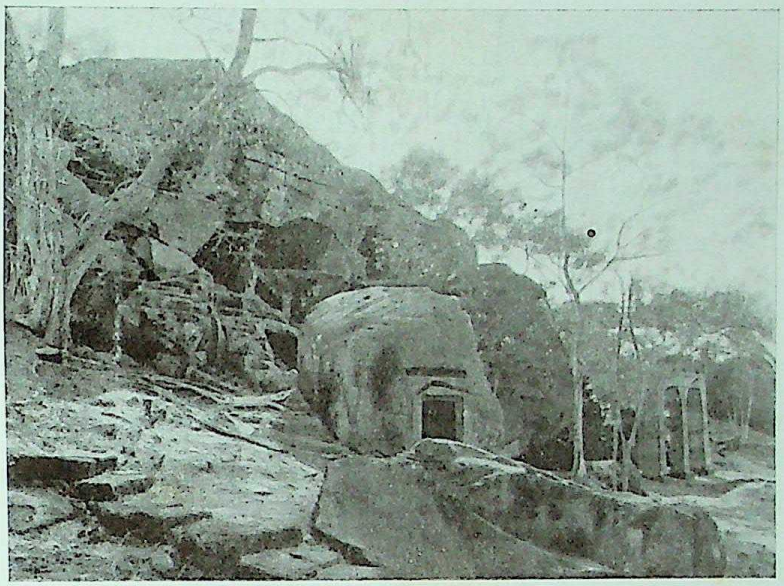
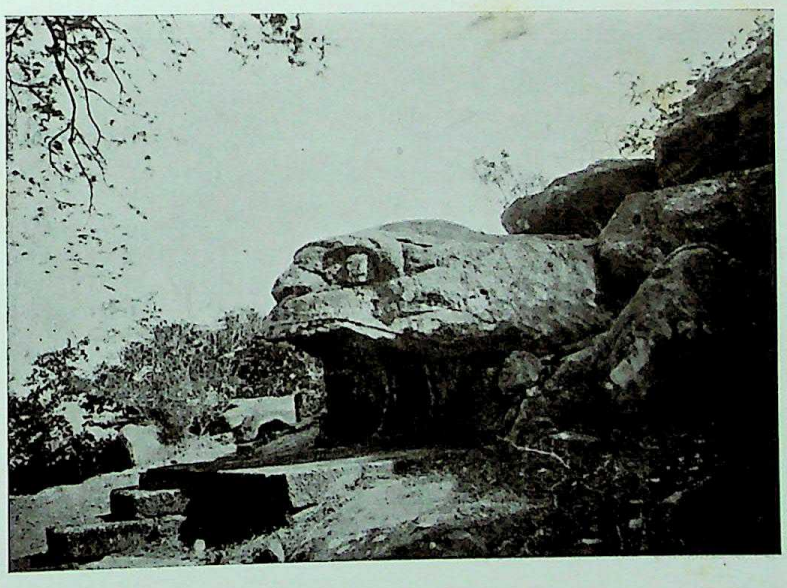
CUTTACK.



THE HATHI GUMPHA GROUP.



THE BAGH OR TIGER CAVE.

CAVES IN THE UDAYAGIRI HILL.

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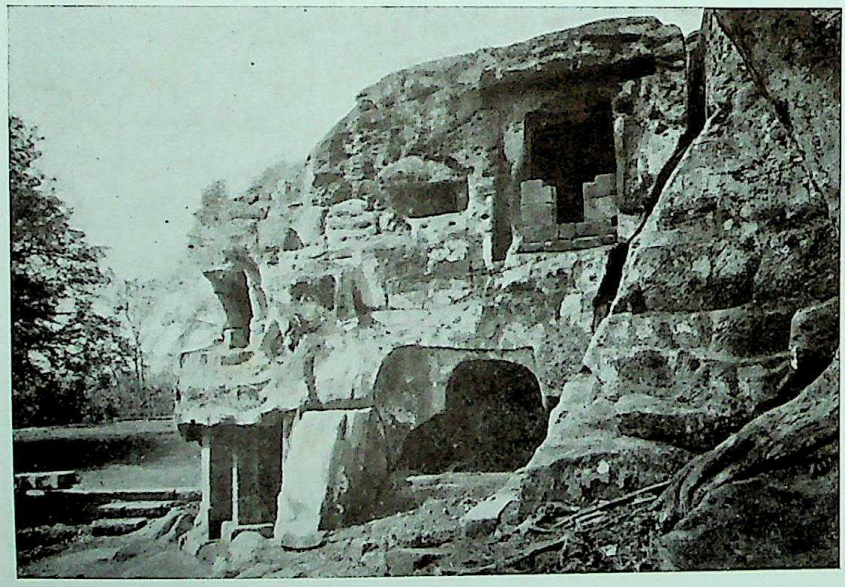
PLATE XIII.

CUTTACK.

THE VAIKUNTHA.
CAVES IN THE UDAYAGIRI HILL.



GROUP OF CAVES.
CAVES IN KONDAGIRI HILL.

[*Facing page 31*]

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adorned the sides of the doorways which are now considerably perished are of a curious and exceptional class. In addition to having the usual conventional forms, the surface is carved in such a way that it would indicate that it was a copy of a wooden original. At a short distance to the south of this cave is another small cave also with a certain amount of sculpture which may be considered to be of Buddhistic origin. There are many other larger caves on this hill of a much later date which obviously belong to the Jaina sect. On the summit of the hill is a large, fairly modern Jaina temple.

None of the caves in this group has so far been numbered in any way and it is only by cross-questioning the local *gurus* that names of these caves can now be ascertained. This seems a pity, as being close to the main road from Cuttack to Puri they are very easy of access to travellers and there is a comfortable rest-house close by. At the town of Bhubaneshwar also there is a very fine Saiva temple, probably one of the oldest in India.

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CHAPTER VII.

THE CAVES IN KATHIAWAR.

JUNAGARH. DANK. TALAJA. SANA.

In the peninsula of Kathiāwār are a few groups of rock temples mostly dating from a very early period. From the earliest times it is probable that Mount Girnar, near Junagarh, was looked on as a sacred place and it is probable that for this reason Asoka used a large stone near the foot of it for the carving of one of his most complete sets of edicts. There are signs that on this mountain there were originally many Buddhist dwellings but more recent Jain edifices and temples have almost obliterated these. The main groups in Kathiāwār are situated at Junagarh in the centre of the peninsula, Talāja, in the east, and Sāna in the south. Although they are probably among the most ancient to be found in India they are far from possessing the same interest that attaches to many of the other groups found elsewhere. Amongst the 140 or so excavations there is not a single Chaitya cave that can for an instant be compared with the caves further east. In fact in the whole province only two Dāgobas have been found, one at Talāja, and the other at Sāna, both of a very simple and primitive type. In the caves in Eastern India, which, owing to inscriptions, can in many cases be definitely dated to a period almost contemporary with the Asokan era this absence of the Dāgoba is still more marked. Neither in Kathiāwār nor Orissa are there to be found vihāras

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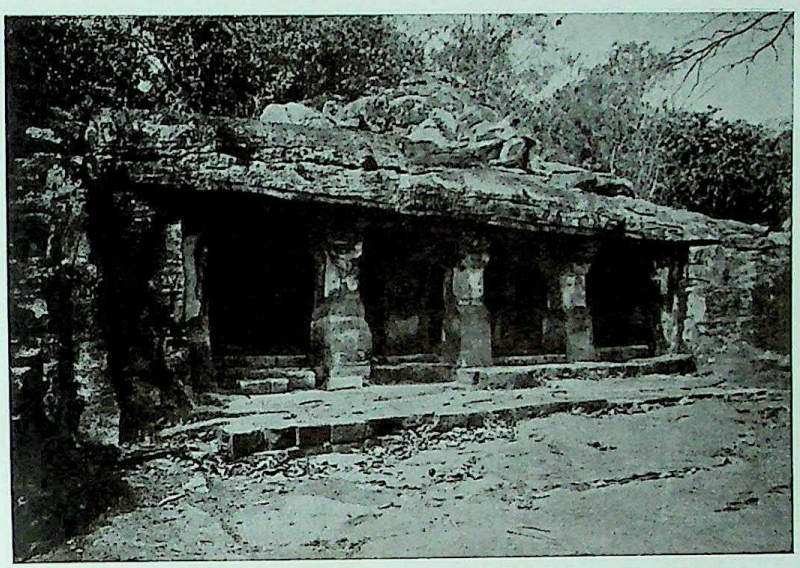
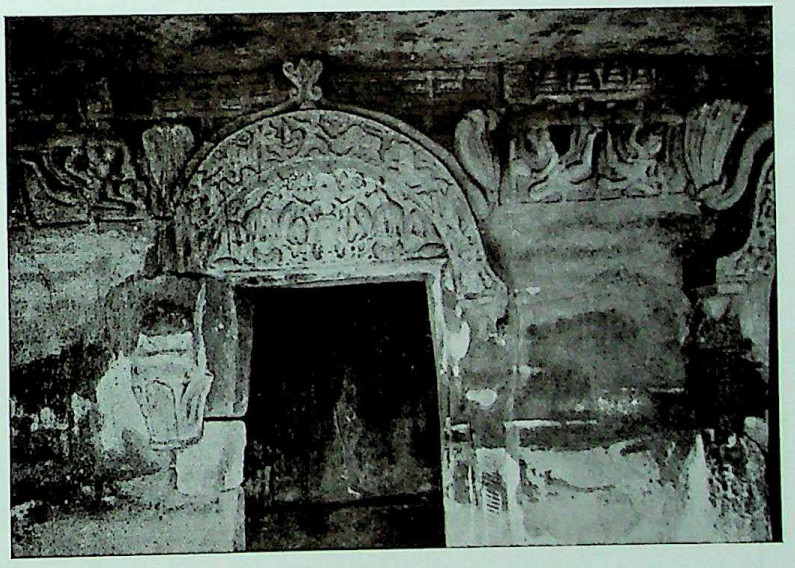
CUTTACK.



THE ANANTA CAVE.



SRI IN THE ANANTA CAVE.

CAVES IN KONDAGIRI HILL.

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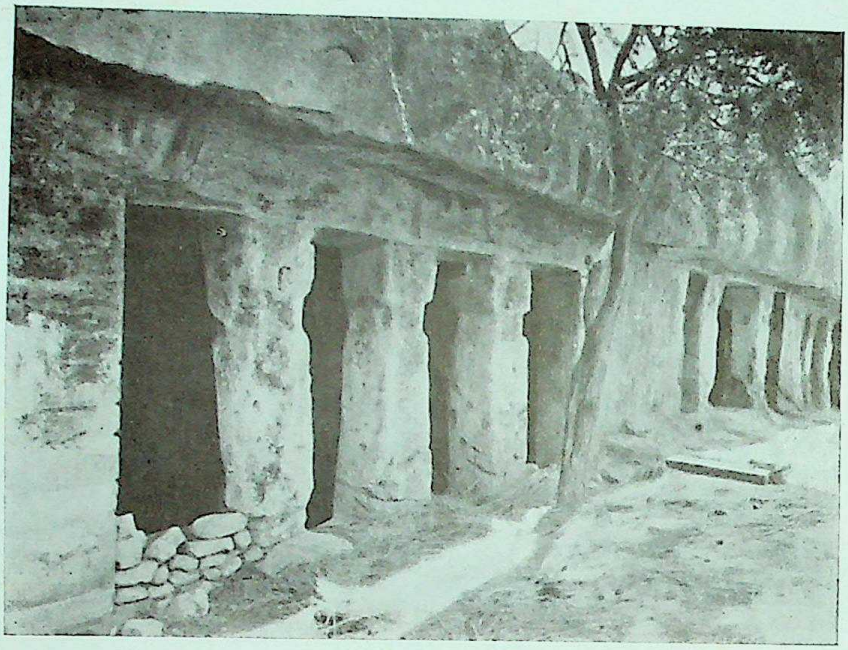
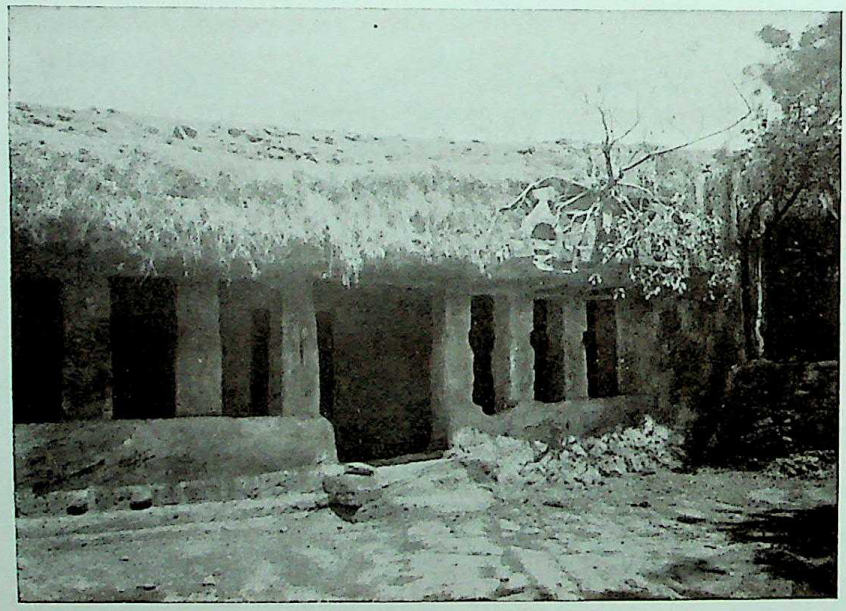
PLATE XV.

KATHIAWAR.



UPPER LINE OF CAVES.



EASTERN LINE OF CAVES.
BAWA PYARA'S MATH.

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surrounded by cells such as are common in the Deccan; in each of the groups at Talāja and Sāna is one large hall, but these would appear to be halls of assembly rather than monastic dwellings, the general feature of the groups being either separate cells or a series of cells opening on to a common verandah.

JUNAGARH.

At Junagarh there are three main groups to be found. On the east side of the town but within the walls is a group known as Bāwa Pyara's Māth or monastery. These are now used as cowsheds and belong to a *guru* who is responsible for the upkeep of a small temple near by. These caves are arranged in three lines, the first and second nearly parallel and facing south, and the second at the eastern end of the other two faces east. They are not cut in the side of a cliff, but are excavated on the rounded spur of a hill with only a small amount of rock above them forming the roof. This is also the case in Orissa. The lowest line of caves are in no way interesting being perfectly plain, the only peculiarity being that in the second and largest of them there is a single octagonal pillar supporting the roof. The base is too much damaged to allow of its shape being determined, but the capital consisted of an abacus of three thin members with the lotus seed form under it, as in the oldest caves at Nāsik and Junnar. The upper range consists of a larger cave and three small ones in line. The front is partly destroyed but has still three square pillars chamfered at the necks. On the façade is the only fragment of carving, a semi-circular arch in very low relief with a cross bar across its diameter forming perhaps the earliest example of the Chaitya-window ornament.

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The last group facing east consists of an open court some 50 feet long on the west side of which is a verandah 40 feet long and nearly 8 feet wide. In the back wall is a room 20 feet wide and 26 feet deep to the extremity of an apse at the back. It is flat roofed and apparently had four square pillars supporting it. If this cave was a Chaitya, as it seems possibly to have been, the Dāgoba must have been structural. The façade of the verandah is also carved with rough Chaitya-window ornaments, which is the only form of carving to be found in this group. At the north end and at a higher level approached by steps is a verandah 20 feet by 7 feet which gives access to the two rooms at the back of it, each about 10 feet square. These caves seem to belong to a very early date and are probably not much after the time of Asoka himself.

At the bottom of a descent on the north of the Jama Masjid in the Uparkot, or fort of Junagarh, is situated a remarkable type of cave temple. Here two square shafts have been sunk and galleries formed round these shafts, the complete excavation consisting of two storeys. Entrance to these is by a staircase leading to a deep tank or bath about 11 feet square with a covered verandah on three sides of it. The second chamber which is of two storeys is entered from the north-east corner of the bath room. It is a large chamber 36 feet long and 27 feet wide with six columns supporting the roof. There has evidently been a considerable amount of carving in this chamber, but owing to the inferior quality of the rock it has almost entirely perished. In the north-east a door leads into a small apartment which has a hole in the roof blackened with smoke and which may have been used as an occasional cook-room to prepare warm

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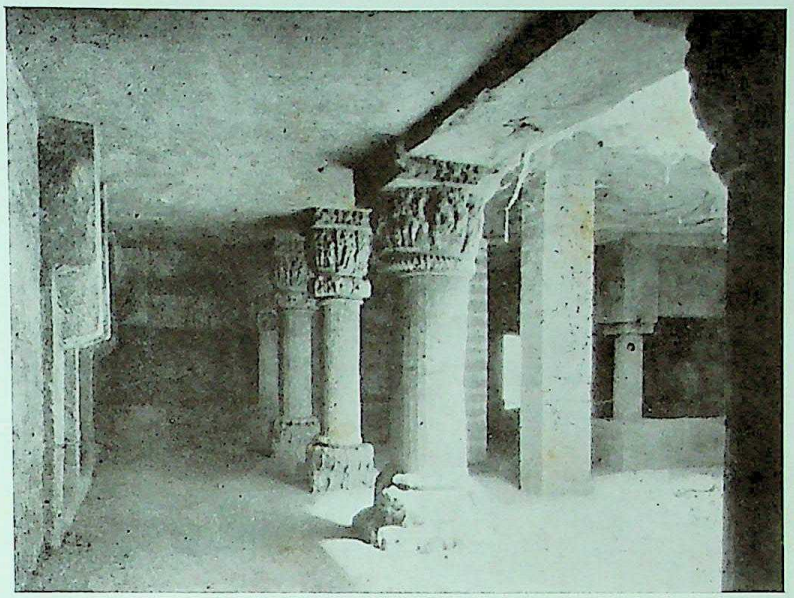
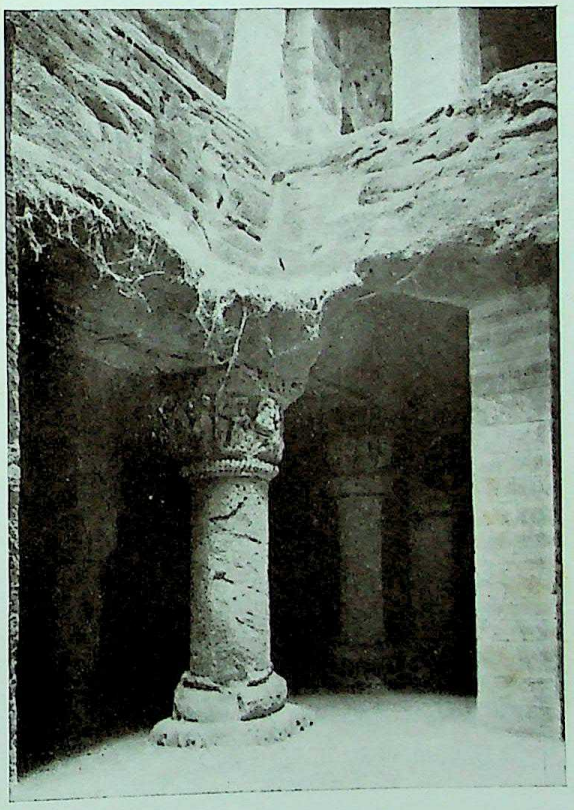
KATHIAWAR.



PILLARS IN THE LOWER CHAMBER.



A CORNER OF LOWER CHAMBER.
UPARKOT.

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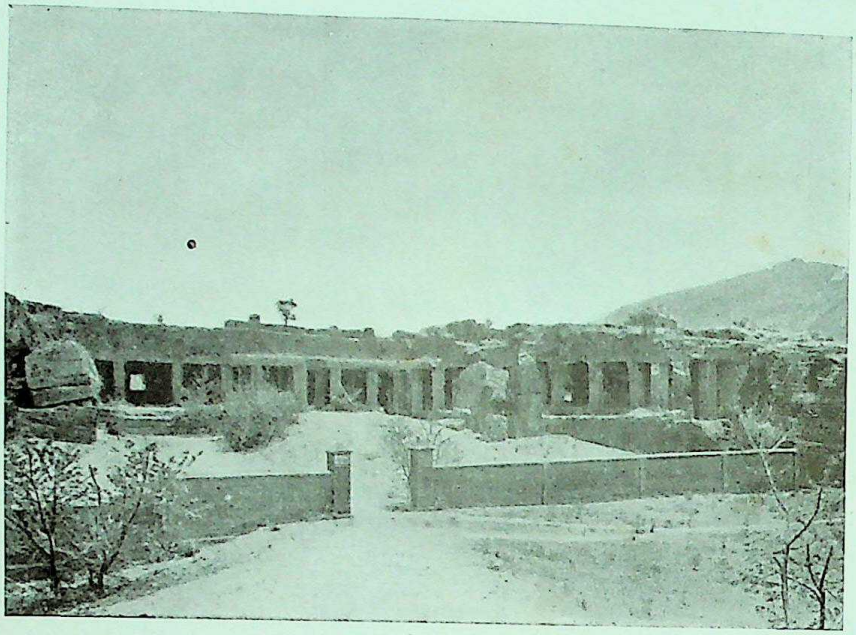
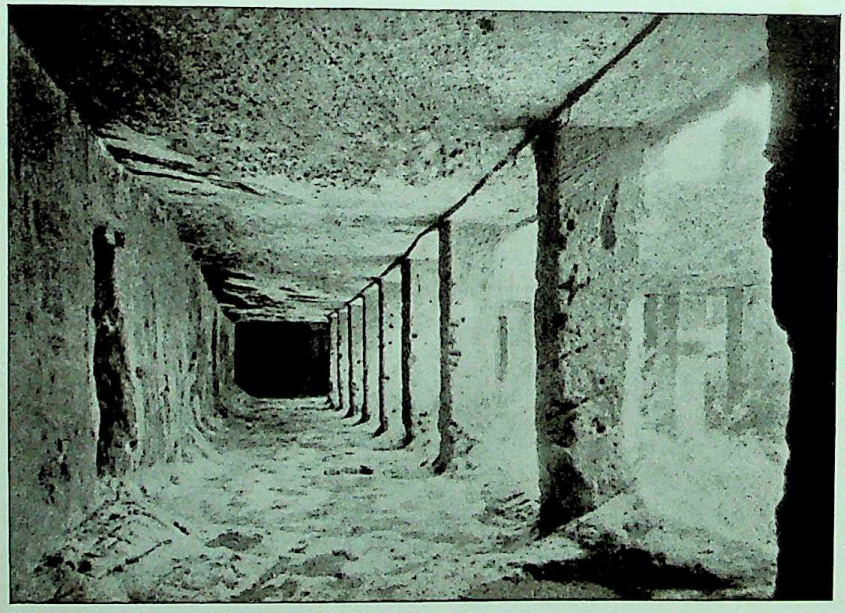
PLATE XVII.

KATHIAWAR.



GENERAL VIEW.



SOUTHERN CORRIDOR.

KHENGAR'S OR KAPRA KODA'S PALACE.

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drinks, etc., for those who had been enjoying the bath. By the side of this apartment a door leads to a stair descending to the hall below. This lower room measures 40 feet by 31 feet and is in a much better state of preservation than the rest of the group. On entering it we come on a platform on the left side, slightly raised, with two short pillars on the west side supporting a frame above descending from the roof. What this was meant for it is hard to say, unless the depression within was intended to be filled with cotton or other soft substance to form a dais or a seat. Except on the west side, the remainder of the walls is surrounded by bench recesses, divided at regular intervals as in the apartment above. Over these recesses the frieze is ornamented with Chaitya-windows having the Buddhist rail in the lower part of the opening and two figures looking out of each, in many cases two females with something like "ears" on their head-dresses, but too indistinct to distinguish what they represent. The pillars supporting the roof have been carved in a manner, the beauty and richness of the design of which, it would be difficult to excel. The style of carving would lead one to suppose that this cave is of a much later date than others at Junagarh. It cannot be considered to be a vihāra in the ordinary sense but may have been some sort of garden-house, or possibly the bath and pleasure-house of some other structure since perished and interred under the debris that covers the whole of the Uparkot. It is difficult to assign any exact date to this excavation so unlike any met with outside Kathiāwār. There are no images of Buddha or anything to assign it to a later date than the Hināyāna sect and it will probably be right to say that the excavation was done sometime during the fourth century A.D.

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To the north of the city is a series of large excavations known as Khengar's or Kapra Koda's palace. At one time this must have been a very extensive series of corridors and chambers and many parts were of two storeys. It has been cut out on the top of a hill with only sufficient of rock left to form a roof. In some cases the upper storey has almost completely disappeared only leaving the bases of the pillars, and it would appear that the roof of this upper storey must have been structural. It consists of a series of corridors facing both sides of the hill at the west end of which, however, are four shafts of two storeys surrounded by corridors as in the Uparkot caves described above. Still more to the west is a fifth shaft from which is a staircase ascending to the open surface above. It is difficult to say what was the origin of this series of excavations. There is no Buddhistic symbol of any kind to be found, but neither is there any symbol of any other sect and owing to the similarity of part of the excavation to that in the Uparkot there is reason to justify one in assuming that this also was Buddhistic, and may originally have been a large monastery and university for the propagation of Buddhistic teaching used by the missionaries of the faith in the early days.

DHANK.

About 30 miles to the north-west of Junagarh lies the village of Dhank, at one time an important city. There is a group of small caves here, the only ones in Kathiāwār which contain any mythological sculptures; but they are of a very rude description and very much weathered, and are probably of a late date. To the north-west, near the village of Hariesan, is another small group of nine excavations, but they are prefectly plain and require no description. A few miles west

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of Dhank, and near the village of Siddheswar in the ravine called Jhinjuri-jhar is another group of five. It is probable that there were originally more than this, but owing to the decay of the rock they have disappeared. The only trace of ornamentation in this group is the Buddhist rail pattern carved on a low screen connecting the pillars on one of the middle caves. The last to the north is much larger than the rest and has had six square pillars in front of a narrow verandah. It had an open area inside measuring 13 feet by 20 feet from which the roof had been cut out in the same way as the excavations in the Uparkot and Khengar's palace at Junagarh. Around this central court there appear to have been a number of cells with a corridor in front of them.

TALAJA.

On the north-west face of the Talāja hill is a series of about thirty-six Buddhist excavations which were probably originally more numerous, but many of them have been destroyed to make room for a pathway to the Jaina temples at the top. The town is in the south-east of the peninsula about 30 miles south of Bhavnagar near the mouth of the Shetrunji river.

One of the largest of these caves and the only one that now presents any remains of ornamentation is at a height of fully a hundred feet. It is locally known as the Ebhal Mandapa, and measures 75 feet by 67 feet and is 17½ feet high. This large hall, without any cells in its side walls, had four octagonal pillars in front, but none inside to support the roof; nor has it the wall that at Ajanta and elsewhere usually divides such excavations into an outer verandah and inner hall. It seems to have been constructed as a place of assembly for religious instruction, a Dharmsāla in fact, where the early Buddhist missionaries

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preached to the simple people of the district, and taught them the new doctrines. Outside the entrance are wells or tanks on both sides, and several cells. On its façade are fragments of a modified, perhaps a very primitive, form of the horse-shoe or Chaitya-window ornament, and of the Buddhist rail pattern, but this is the only sculpture traceable in these caves.

The others are small caves not meriting description. In one of them is a Dāgoba of a very simple type, the base only entire, and the remains of the torān or capital still attached to the flat roof of the cave. The Dāgoba and general arrangements of these caves are sufficient indications of their being Buddhist works; and though we have no very definite means of determining their antiquity, yet from the simplicity of their arrangements, and except that already mentioned on the façade of the Ebhal Mandapa from the entire absence of sculpture, such as is common in all the later Buddhist caves, we may relegate them to a very early age, possibly even to that of Asoka or soon after.

The rock is of very different qualities in different parts of the hill; but where the existing caves are executed it is full of quartz veins ramified with nodules of varying degrees of hardness, and the disintegration of these under the effects of atmospheric influences has so destroyed the original surface that if any inscriptions ever existed they must have disappeared long ago.

SANA.

In the south of the peninsula and about 12 miles west of Rājula is the hill of Sāna, situated in a wild and desolate part of the country with a perennial stream running at the foot. A little to the east of this in the Lor hill are some natural caverns which certainly show signs of having been occupied and close to them is a perfectly plain excavation probably a Buddhist

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ascetic's cell. On the top of the hill are some foundations of very large bricks.

The hill is honeycombed with more than sixty caves, but like those elsewhere in Kathiāwār they are of a very simple plain type. Here, too, the largest near the bottom of the hill is known as the Ebhal Mandapa. It is 69 feet by 61 feet, and 16½ feet high, originally with six pillars in front but none inside. About 120 feet higher up, on the face of the same spur, is a cave known as the Bhima Chauri facing north-east; it has a verandah in front and measures about 38 feet by 40 feet, the roof being supported by four octagonal pillars, with capitals and bases of the "lota" or water-pot pattern so frequent in the Nāsik and Junnar caves. Round the sides also runs a raised stone bench, a common feature in such caves. Close by is a Chaitya or chapel cave 18 feet wide and 31 feet deep and 31½ feet high, the roof is flat but the inner end is of the semi-circular form; the Dāgoba, nearly 8 feet in diameter, is very plain and without any ornament while the capital has been broken off by later Hindus, to convert it into a huge "linga" or emblem of Siva, and as such it is now worshipped by the people of the neighbourhood. Some of the excavations consist merely of verandahs with cells opening out on to them, while there are two other small Chaityas similar to that described above. High up the face of the hill is a cistern of excellent water; and large portions of the stairs hewn in the rock leading from one group of caves to another are still pretty entire.

These caves like those at Talāja, from the simplicity of their arrangements and their flat-roofed Chaityas, must also be referred to a very early age, possibly as a mean date about 150 B.C., though they probably range through at least a century between the earliest and the latest excavations.

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CHAPTER VIII.

THE CAVES OF KARLI.

In the hills known as the Borghāt, between Bombay and Poona, are a number of groups of cave temples, Kondāne, Bhāja, Bedsa, Shelarwādi, and Karli, the latter being the best known. They are all of a date approximating to the beginning of the Christian era, or with limits of 100 years or so on each side.

The group known as Karli are situated about two miles to the north of the Bombay-Poona Road, and are reached by a road leaving the main road at mile 78½ from Bombay or 35½ from Poona. From the plain to the level of the caves is an ascent of about 500 feet by an easy and well-made pathway. The nearest railway station is Malavli, 3 miles to the south, on the G. I. P. Railway. They consist of a large Chaitya and several vihāras, some of the latter much ruined.

This Chaitya is without exception the largest and finest, as well as the best preserved, of its class. There are many inscriptions in and about the cave, from which some dates may be approximately inferred. Nāhapāna's and Ushabhādata's names occur, the latter in connection with grants of land whose revenue was to be set aside for the benefit of the monks, and is probably sometime after the conclusion of the work. This however gives us A.D. 120 as a limit in one direction. Two inscriptions, one in very large letters of an early form immediately above the elephants on the left side of the porch

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and another on the great pillar in front, mention the great king Bhūtapāla, supposed to be the Devabhūti of the Sanga dynasty about 70 B.C. From the style of its architecture and the form of the letters used in these inscriptions it is probably not wrong to place the excavation of this cave slightly anterior to the Christian era. It probably belongs to the first half century before that time, rather than to any period after it. As Mr. Fergusson remarks " It was excavated at a time when the style was at its greatest purity. In it all the architectural defects of the previous examples are removed; the pillars of the nave are quite perpendicular. The original screen is superseded by one in stone ornamented with sculpture, its first appearance apparently in such a position, and the architectural style had reached a position that was never afterwards surpassed."* At the entrance of the cave stands at the present time a pillar surmounted by four lions. It is almost certain that on the right hand side where now stands the Siva temple there was a second pillar, surmounted by the Chakra or wheel, the emblem of the law. Designs for these pillars are to be seen on the eighth pillar on the right hand side of the hall in the Chaitya. The outer porch is rather wider than the body of the building, being 52 feet wide and 15 feet deep, and is closed in front by an outer screen, composed of two stout octagonal pillars, without either base or capital, supporting what is now a plain mass of rock, but which was once ornamented by a wooden gallery, forming the principal ornament of the façade. Above this a dwarf colonnade or attic of four columns between pilasters admitted light to the great window and this again was surmounted by a wooden cornice or ornament of some sort, though we cannot now restore it, since only the mortices remain

* Cave Temples of India, page 232. Fergusson and Burgess.

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that attached it to the rock, which are not sufficient for the purpose. Considerable modifications have been made at a later period in these sculptures. Originally the fronts of three large elephants, standing on a base carved with the "rail pattern" in each end wall, supported a framed frieze, also ornamented with the "rail"; but at both ends this second "rail" has been afterwards cut away to insert figures of Buddha and his attendants, of which no representations existed when the cave was first executed. Above this was a thick quadrantal moulding, and then another "rail," the return of which forms the sill of the great window. On this stand miniature temple fronts, crowned with the Chaitya-window, and between them pairs of figures some of them among the best sculptures of the kind in India. Above this, the Chaitya arch and "rail pattern" are repeated again and again to the top. On the front wall of the cave both the "rail" at the bottom and that on a level with the heads of the doors have been cut away in later times to make room for images of Buddha and his attendants, Padmapāni, etc., and in doing so the older inscriptions have also been mercilessly hewn away. The pairs of large figures on each side of the doors alone appear, like those at Kānheri, to have belonged to the original design. In the middle of the space between the central and right hand doors is inserted a sculpture which must be of a very late date; Buddha is there attended by Padmapāni and perhaps Manjusri seated on the *sinhasāna* with his feet on the lotus over a conventionalised wheel, supported by two deer, and under the wheel is a supporting pier held by Nāga figures, while over Buddha's head two Vidyadhāras hold a tiara. The entrance consists of three doorways under a gallery exactly corresponding with our rood-loft, one leading to the centre and one to each of the side aisles and over the gallery the whole end

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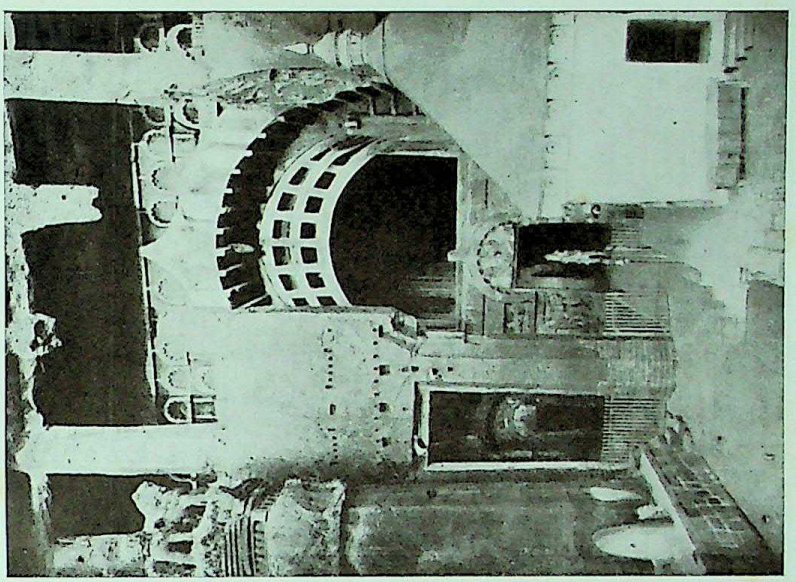
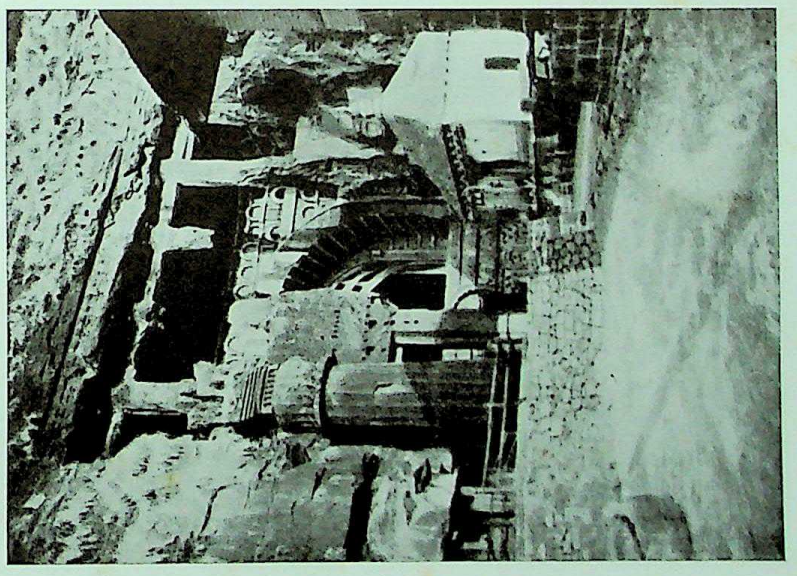
KARLI.



ENTRANCE TO CHAITYA.



ENTRANCE TO CHAITYA.

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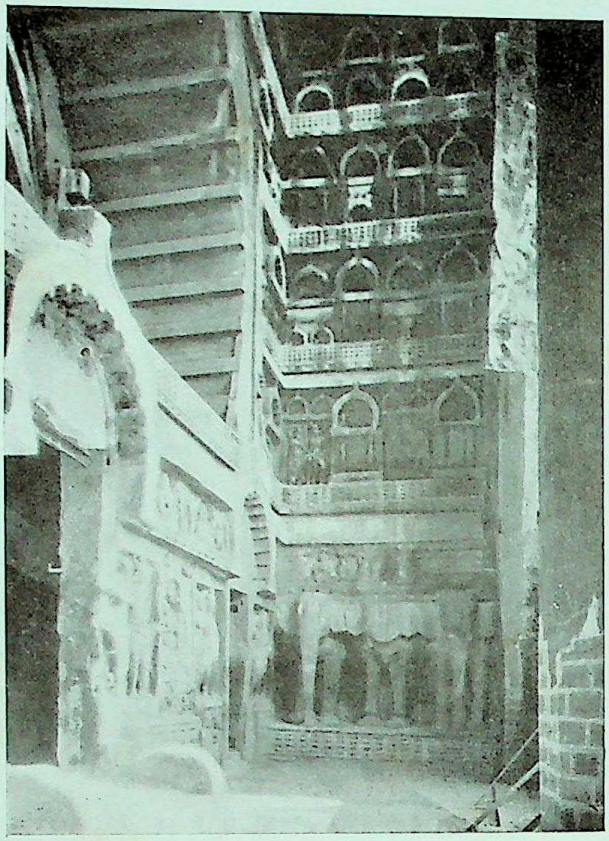
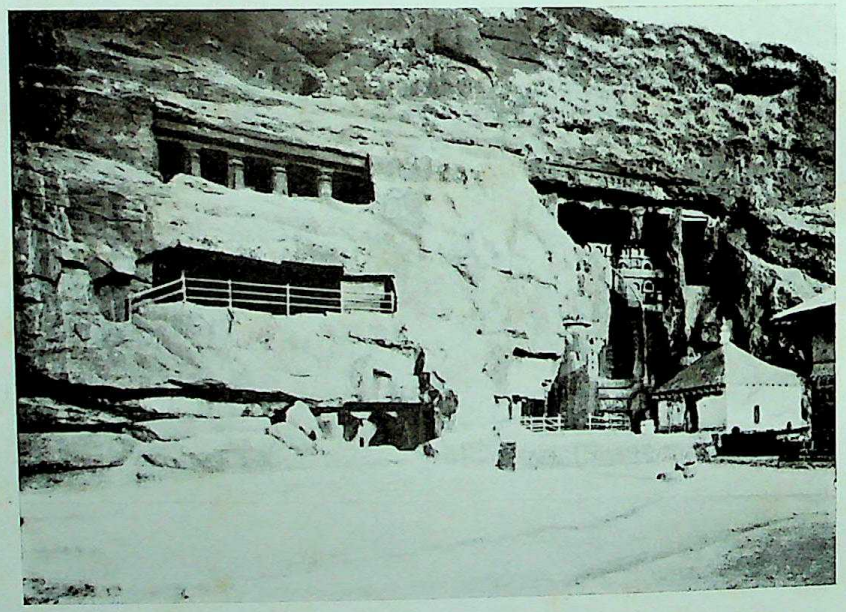
KARLI.



RIGHT SIDE OF PORCH OF CHAITYA.



CAVE II AND PORCH OF CHAITYA.

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of the hall is open as in the Chaitya halls forming one great window, through which all the light is admitted. The interior of the great Chaitya resembles very much an early Christian church in its arrangements, consisting of a nave and side aisles, terminating in an apse or semi-dome, round which the aisle is carried. From the entrance to the back wall is a distance of 124 feet and the total width is 45 feet. The side aisles, however, are much narrower than in Christian churches, the central one being 25½ feet, so that the others are only 10 feet wide, including the thickness of the pillars. The height is 46 feet from the floor to the apex. There are fifteen pillars on each side separating the nave from the aisles. These pillars are an excellent example of the symbols explained in Chapter III. Their bases consist of the waterpot or bowl of Lakshmī, the shaft is octagonal representing the Sangha or brotherhood, while the capital is the seed of the sacred lotus of Egypt (Nelumbium) supporting as in the ancient Vedic altar, in this case, two elephants, guardians of the southern quarter bearing two figures, generally a man and a woman, but sometimes two females, very much better executed than such ornaments usually are. The eighth pillar on the right hand side is sixteen-sided, having on the central north face a small Dāgoba and the designs of what were probably the pillars at the porch as mentioned above. On the fifth pillar on the left hand side is a niche in which were originally deposited the relics of a saint of Sopāra. The seven pillars behind the Dāgoba are plain octagonal piers without either base or capital. Above the sculptures on the capitals springs the roof, semi-circular in general section, but somewhat stilted on the sides, so as to make its height greater than the semi-diameter. In this roof are a series of wooden ribs said by some to be coeval with the excavation, they have probably been renovated from

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time to time, the first two close to the entrance having been replaced in the time of Lord Curzon. It is not known for what purpose these ribs* were placed in the roof, whether it was merely a copy of an earlier wooden building, but there is the remarkable effect that in this cave and at Bhāja where are similar ribs, there is no echo as is very noticeable in other caves. Immediately under the semi-dome of the apse is placed the Dāgoba—in this instance, a plain dome on a two-storeyed circular drum, the upper margins of each section surrounded by the rail ornaments. It is surmounted by a capital or tee of the usual form, and on this stands a wooden umbrella much blackened by age and smoke, but almost entire. The canopy is circular, minutely carved on the under-surface, and droops on two sides only, the front and rear. It seems probable that the side walls were originally painted in some way. There are obvious signs that there has been some sort of plaster and at the left hand side near the

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* Samples of the wood from the ribs of the roof of the great Chaitya were submitted for analysis, and the following is the report:—

Copy of letter No. 3/8-73/W.T., dated 14th August, 1929, from the Forest Economist, New Forest P.O., to the District Forest Officer, North Salem, Hosur Cattle Farm.

In continuation of my No. 2/8-73/G.1, of 29th April, I have to report that the sample of wood submitted by Major Wauchope has now been imbedded and examined and it is undoubtedly *Tectona grandis* (Linn.) teak. Pieces were submitted to the Biochemist and to the Archæological Chemist for examination. Dr. Krishna, Biochemist, reports: "It has not been possible to detect any preservative, either organic or inorganic, in the few bits of wood that you sent for analysis . . . " The Archæological Chemist writes: "I have examined the bits of wood under the microscope and have noticed that a black shining deposit fills the cavities between the grains. Moreover the wood appears to have been scorched by fire.

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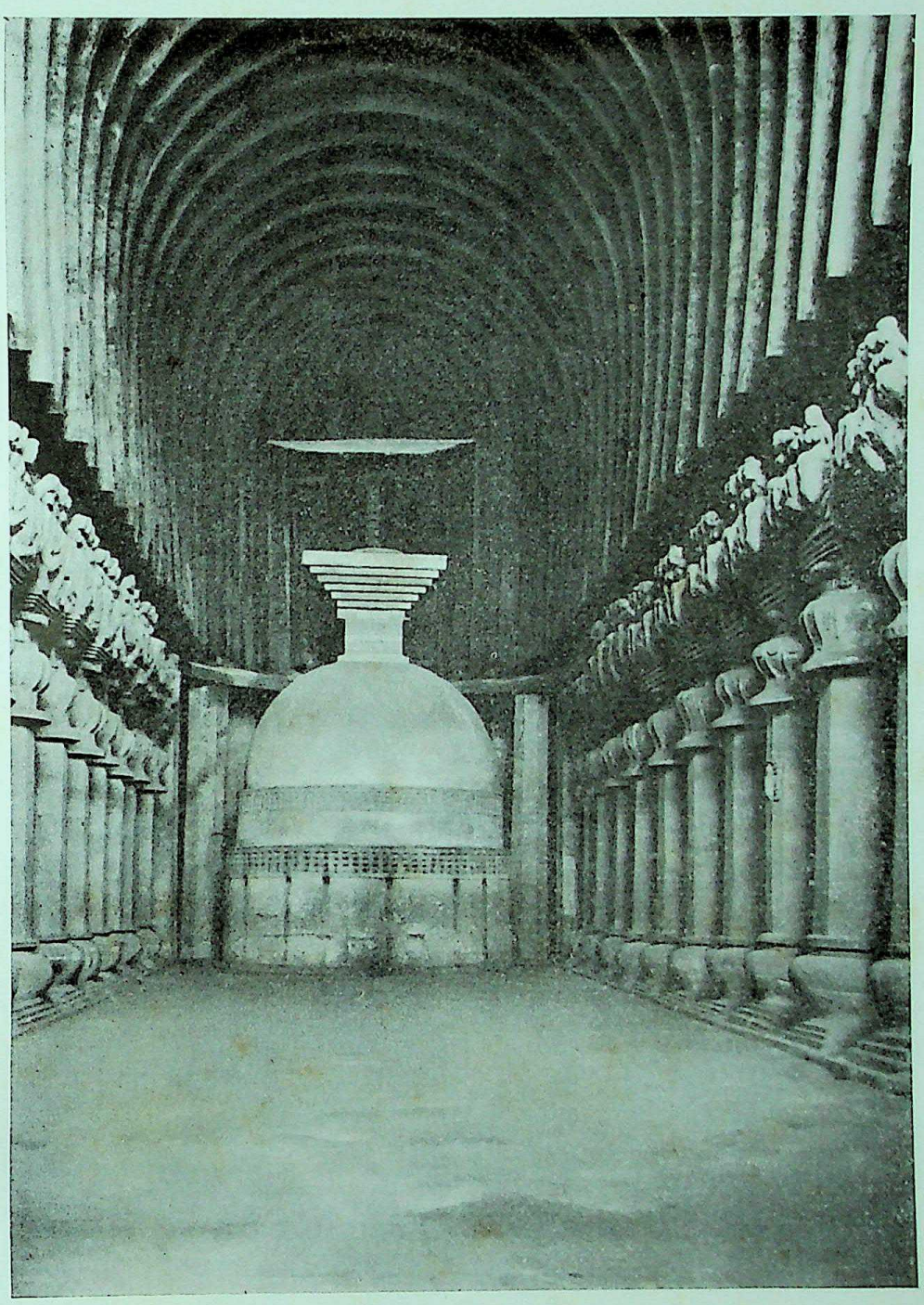
KARLI.



INTERIOR OF CHAITYA.

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Dāgoba is more than a suspicion of a frescoe of "rail pattern" some 10 feet above the floor level. The whole interior is as solemn and grand as it can well be and the mode of lighting is most perfect, one undivided volume of light coming through a single opening overhead and falling directly on the altar or the principal object in the building, leaving the rest in comparative obscurity. The effect is considerably heightened by the closely set thick columns that divide the three aisles from one another, as they suffice to prevent the boundary walls from ever being seen, and, as there are no openings in the walls, the view between the pillars is practically unlimited.

The caves at Karli are not numbered in any particular sequence. The Chaitya just described is cave I and number II is a three-storeyed vihāra just to the left of this Chaitya. The top storey has a verandah with four pillars, with slightly ornamented capitals. On the left side in the top storey is a raised platform in front of five cells with slots for a beam along the front and apparently each cell could also be isolated. All

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"In my opinion, the black shining deposit consists of tarry matter, which was given off by the wood itself by the action of fire, and which has strong preservative properties. The tarry matter has evidently become oxidized and therefore resists the action of solvents.

"I regret I am unable to give any other explanation for this remarkable preservative of the wood. I might also mention that wooden objects 5,000 years old have also been found.

"It is quite possible, of course, that the wood might be charred after being placed in the building from which it is taken. It is, however, possible that all the characteristics which I have been able to observe in these specimens in microscopic examination, both with and without imbedding, could result from age without the assistance of fire. It is further quite possible for teakwood to last as these samples have lasted without any preservative or artificial treatment whatever."

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the doors are so cut that it is obvious there must have been wooden jambs and doors fitted.

Cave III to the north of cave IV is a two-storeyed vihāra the ground floor of which has been considerably damaged. It appears originally to have had a wooden front which has now completely disappeared. There is a small excavation with a ruined Dāgoba of which the base is still left.

Cave IV is situated to the south of the Chaitya and from an inscription we learn that it was given by Haraphāna, a Persian, in the reign of the Andra king, Gautamiputra Pulumāvi, about A.D. 20. It is a plain vihāra with nothing remarkable about it. Besides the caves described there are a few small cells and Bhikshu-grihas of no great interest or importance.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE CAVES OF BHAJA.

BHAJA is situated about a mile from Malavla station on the G. I. P. Railway and is about 2½ miles south of the Bombay-Poona Road from which a branch road turns off at 78½ miles from Bombay. The cave temples are situated just above the village from which they are approached by an easy pathway.

Commencing from the north, the first is apparently a natural cavern, 30 feet long, slightly enlarged. The next ten are plain vihāras, with but little particular about them. No. VI is an irregular vihāra, much dilapidated. The hall has been irregular, but about 14 feet square, with two cells on each side and three in the back, and with Chaitya-window ornaments all round over the cell doors, as in cave XII, at Ajanta, and again here, on the back wall of No. IX where is a frieze projecting 2 feet 2 inches with four Chaitya arches connected by the "rail pattern" ornament. There has been a verandah in front of this excavation, of which a fragment of the base of one of the pillars is left, and a broken capital with animal figures upon it, showing the style was somewhat similar to that of cave VIII at Nāsik.

The Chaitya cave of the group, No. XII, is one of the most interesting in India, and certainly one of the most important to be found anywhere for the history of cave architecture.

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It is hardly worth while to waste much time in the inquiry whether it or the caves at Kondāne are the earliest. They are so like one another in all essential respects that there cannot be much difference in their age. They are certainly both as early or earlier than 200 B.C., and neither can claim to have been excavated before the time of Asoka, 250 B.C. Be this as it may, if we had only the Kondāne cave, it is so ruined that we should hardly be able to understand from it the peculiarities of the cave architecture of the age, while the Bhāja caves excavated in a better material are still so perfect as to explain every detail.

The illustrations of the front of this cave sufficiently explain its general appearance. The wooden screen that originally closed its front is, of course, gone, but we can easily restore it, in the mind's eye, from the literal copies of it in the rock which we find at Bedsa, Karli, and elsewhere, aided by the mortices cut in the floor and at the sides, showing how the timbers were originally attached to the rock. When this is realised it seems impossible that anyone can look at these caves and not see that we have reached the incunabula of stone architecture in India. It is a building of a people accustomed to wooden structures, and to wooden structures only, but here petrified into the more durable material. There is not one feature nor one detail which is not essentially wooden throughout, or that could have been invented from any form of stone construction, or was likely to be used in lithic architecture, except in the rock. What is equally interesting, and equally conclusive on this point is that for 1,000 years after its date, we can trace the Indians slowly but steadily struggling to emancipate themselves from these wooden trammels, and eventually succeeding in doing so.

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BHAJA.

CAVES XI, XII, XIII, XIV.

CHAITYA FRONT.

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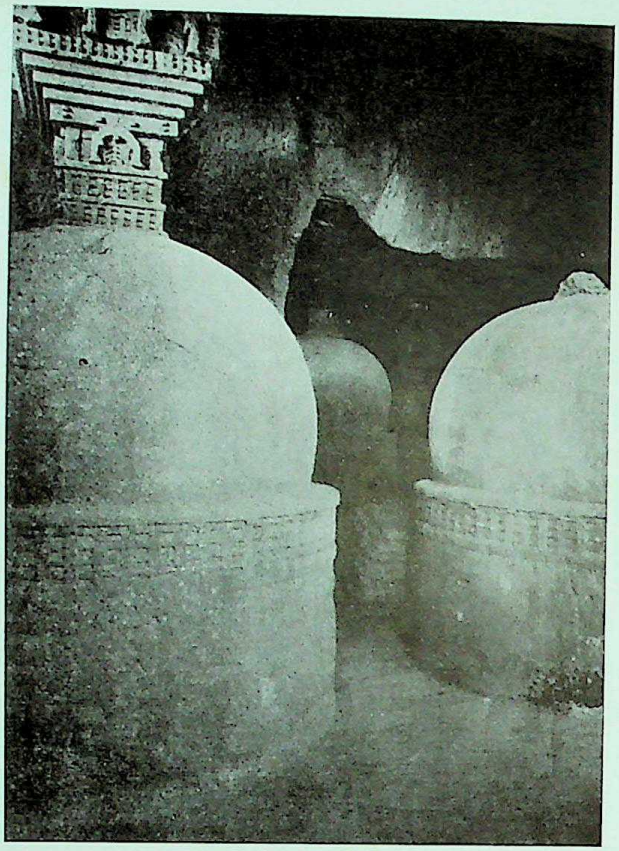
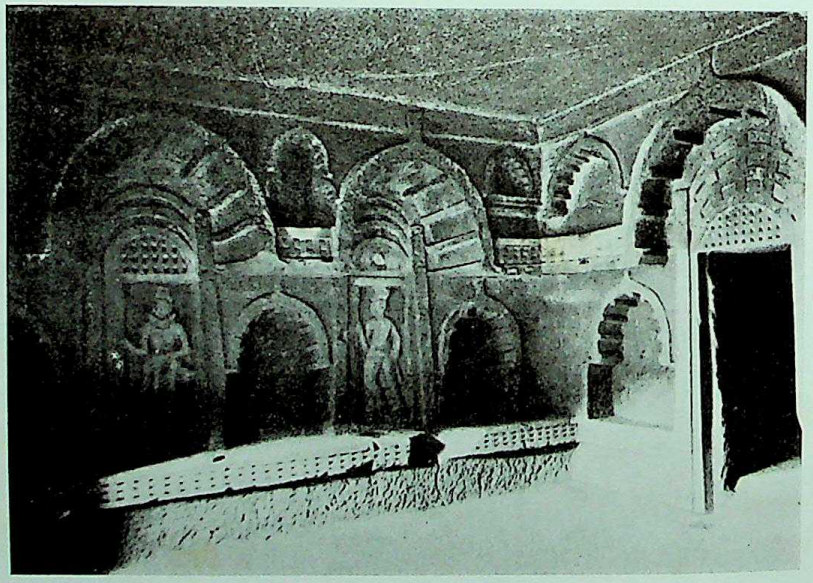


GROUP OF DAGOBAS.



SOUTHERN VIHARA.

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Unfortunately, however, it was then too late for the Buddhists, who were the inventors of the style, to profit by its resultant conversion into a perfected lithic style of architecture.

"The cave is nearly 27 feet wide and 60 feet long with a semi-circular apse at the back, and having an aisle 3½ feet wide, separated from the nave by twenty-seven plain octagonal shafts a little over 11 feet in height. These rake inwards about 5 inches on each side as in the earlier caves in the east. The Dāgoba is 11 feet in diameter and 10 feet high altogether, and the box upon it is two-storeyed and in the bottom there is a hole sunk down into the dome for the purpose of securing the shaft of the umbrella that once surmounted the Dāgoba. The upper portion of this box or capital, being of a separate stone and hewn out, indicates very distinctly that it was the receptacle of some relic. The usual thin flat members that surmount the capital are entirely wanting in this. On four of the pillars are carved in low relief seven ornaments or Bauddha symbols. On the eighth pillar on the right side is a niche much the same as at Karli and probably for the same purpose, *viz.*, to house the relic of some saint. The roof is arched in the usual way and as at Karli is ribbed and the absence of any echo is again noticeable here." *

By the side of this Chaitya, but with the line of its front coming forward to the south, is a vihāra, No. XIII, the front (if ever it existed in stone, which is very doubtful) has been

* The description of the Chaitya cave is taken direct from the Cave Temples of India, by Fergusson and Burgess. Much other information is from that book. The caves have not been numbered by the Archæological Department.

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quite destroyed, but it is probable that it must originally have been of wood. In the back of the hall are three cells, the side ones with a single bench, and the central one with two, and with a small recess under each. Over the doors of all these cells is the Chaitya arch, connected by a frieze of "rail pattern." Over the front, also, are ornamental arches and a double course of "rail pattern."

Next to this further south is cave No. XIV, another vihāra containing a few cells. Cave XV is above cave XIII and No. XIV is reached by a stair to the south of cave XIV. These are also small vihāras.

At a little distance along the scarp is a large excavation containing a group of fourteen Chaityas or Dāgobas of various sizes cut in the rock. All have the "Buddhist rail pattern" round the upper portion of the drum. The five under the rock vary in diameter from 6 feet 3 inches to 4 feet 8 inches, and the front two have the relic box only on the dome, as in the great cave, while the three behind them have also heavy capitals, the largest on the left joined to the roof by the stone shaft of the Chhatri, or umbrella, while over the other two the circle of the Chhatri is carved on the roof with a hole in the centre, over a corresponding one in the capital, evidently for the insertion of a wooden rod. Of those outside, the first to the north has a handsome capital, 3 feet 8 inches high, very elaborately carved; most of the others are broken, so that it is not easy to say how they have been finished, except that the eighth, and possibly others, were of the simple box form without any cornice. In four of the capitals under the roof there are holes on the upper surface as if for placing relics on them, and in two cases there is a depression round

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the edge of the hole as if for a closely fitting cover. On some of them are the names of *Theros*, but nearly obliterated.

Still farther along the scarp is another small vihāra containing four cells. The outside of this vihāra is ornamented with figures and sculptures in the Sānchi style, and inside these figures occur again with the "Buddhist rail pattern."

Farther along still under the waterfall are some small chambers of little interest or importance.

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CHAPTER X.

THE CAVES OF BEDSA.

In the same spur as the caves of Bhāja, but on the southern side and facing the Pauna River some 300 feet above the plains is a small group of caves known as Bedsa, or Karunj-Bedsa. The easiest way to approach these is to leave the Bombay-Poona Road at the 31st mile from Poona and take the village track south to Pimploli. From there, there is a steep ascent over the range and a steep descent on the south side to the caves.

The group consists of an old Chaitya and vihāra of unique shape and a few cells and cisterns. To the west of the Chaitya the first excavation is a small circular chamber containing an unfinished Dāgoba. A few yards to the right is a small Dāgoba standing in the open between which and the entrance to the Chaitya are two cisterns. The entrance to the Chaitya is through a passage 12 or 13 yards in length cut through the rock, in order to get sufficiently far back to obtain the necessary height for the façade. This is a pity, as the mass of rock left on each side hides the greater portion of the front, a passage only 5 feet wide having been left between the rock and massive octagonal pillars forming the front of the temple. Two of these are free standing and two attached to the sides. Their bases are of the "Lota," or water vessel

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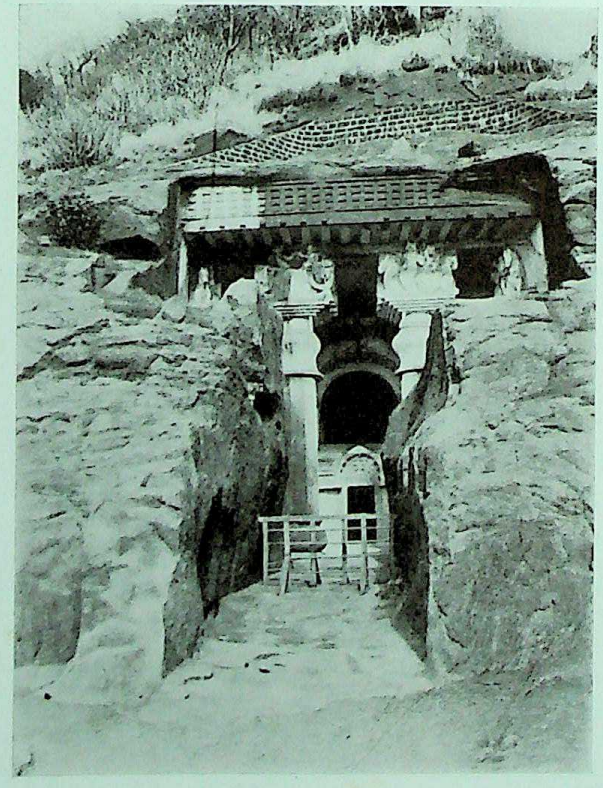
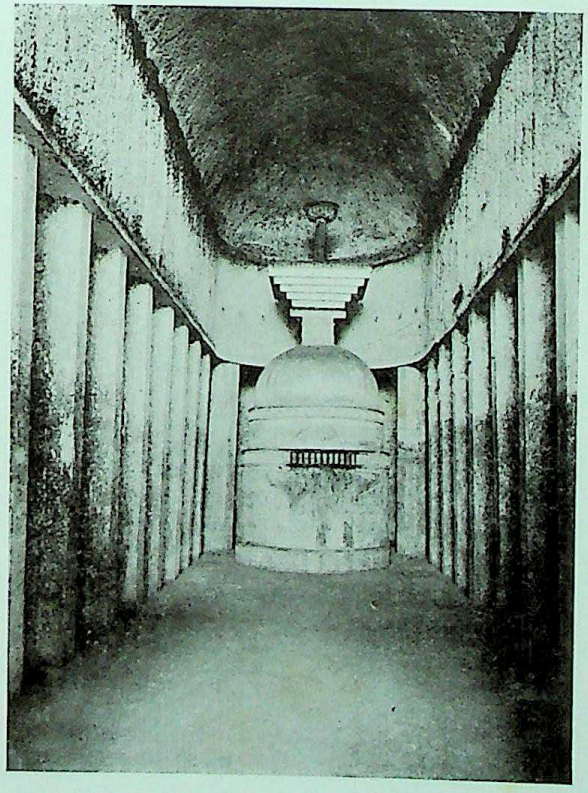
BEDSA.



INTERIOR OF CHAITYA.



ENTRANCE TO CHAITYA.

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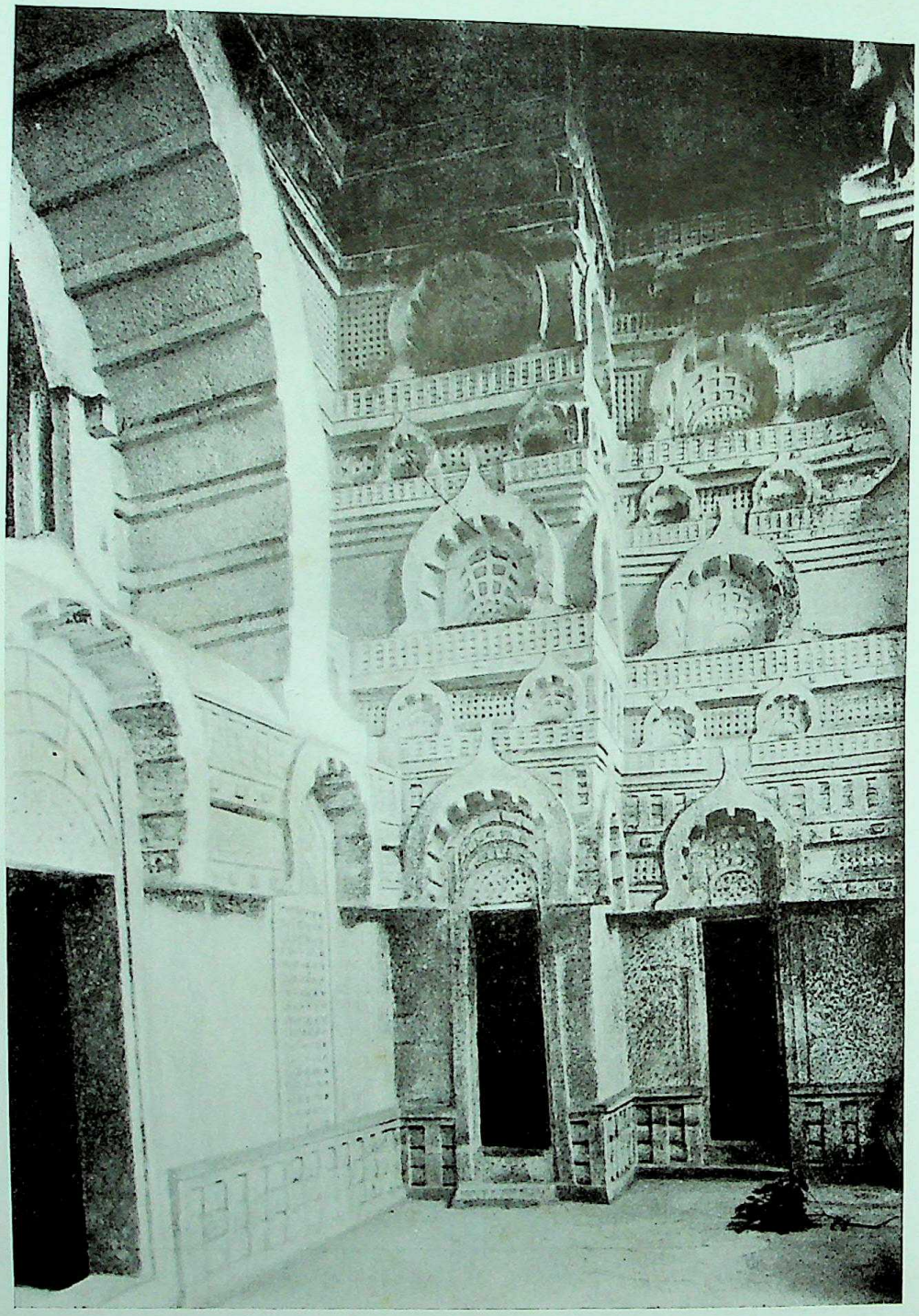
PLATE XXIV.

BEDSA.



EAST SIDE OF PORCH OF CHAITYA.

[*Facing page 53*]

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pattern, from which rise shafts, tapering slightly and surmounted by an ogee capital of the Persepolitan type grooved vertically, supporting a fluted torus in a square frame, as at Junnar, over which lie four thin square tiles each projecting over the one below. On each corner of these last crouch elephants, horses, bullocks and sphinxes, with male and female riders executed with very considerable freedom.

The verandah or porch within these pillars is nearly 12 feet wide and 30 feet long, with cells at each end, that on the left being unfinished. Along the base of the walls and from the lintels of the cell-doors upwards, the porch walls are covered with "rail pattern" on flat and curved surfaces intermixed with Chaitya-window ornaments, very much the same as at Karli but with an entire absence of any animal or human representation. This and the complete absence of any Bauddha figure is one of the most decisive proofs of the early Hināyāna character of these caves. As remarked by Fergusson the "rail ornamentation becomes less and less used after the date of the Bhāja and Bedsa Chaitya caves, and disappears wholly in the fourth or fifth century, but during that period its greater or less prevalence in any building is one of the surest indications we have of the relative age of any two examples."* The rood screen is introduced in stone in front, from which it may be inferred that it is later than Bhāja or Kondāne but must follow them pretty closely.

The interior has undergone various vissicitudes in the last hundred years. Burgess, in his description of these caves in the "Cave Temples of India," says "all the wood work has disappeared within the last twenty years, for Westergaard (in 1844) described it as ribbed, and a writer

* India and East Archit., pp. 115, 116.

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in the *Oriental Christian Spectator*, about 1861, found fragments of one timber lying on the floor. On the columns, as late at least as 1871, could be distinctly traced portions of ancient paintings, chiefly Buddha with attendants; but a local official under the idea of 'cleaning' this fine cave had the whole beslobbered with whitewash, and obliterated all the paintings." * From this description of paintings it would appear that they were of a much later date than the excavation of the cave.

The interior is 45 feet long and 21 feet wide, and as at Bhāja the pillars between the nave and the aisle are slightly sloping, another indication of the early age of the cave, many of them are plain but the five on the right of the Dāgoba have roses and other Bauddha symbols carved on them. The Dāgoba has a broad fillet of "rail ornament" at the base and at the top of the cylinder, from which rises a second and shorter cylinder also surrounded above by the "rail ornament." The box of the capital is small and is surmounted by a very heavy capital in which stands the square wooden shaft of the umbrella, surmounted by a rose like ornament, the umbrella itself having disappeared.

Between this and the vihāra is a large unfinished cell. The vihāra is quite unique of its kind. If it was ever closed in front, it must have been with some structural wall which has now been completely removed. The interior is 32 feet long and 18 feet wide but the end is circular as in a Chaitya cave, all round the walls are cells, their doors being surmounted by Chaitya-windows connected by a string course of

* Cave Temples of India, pp. 230, 231.

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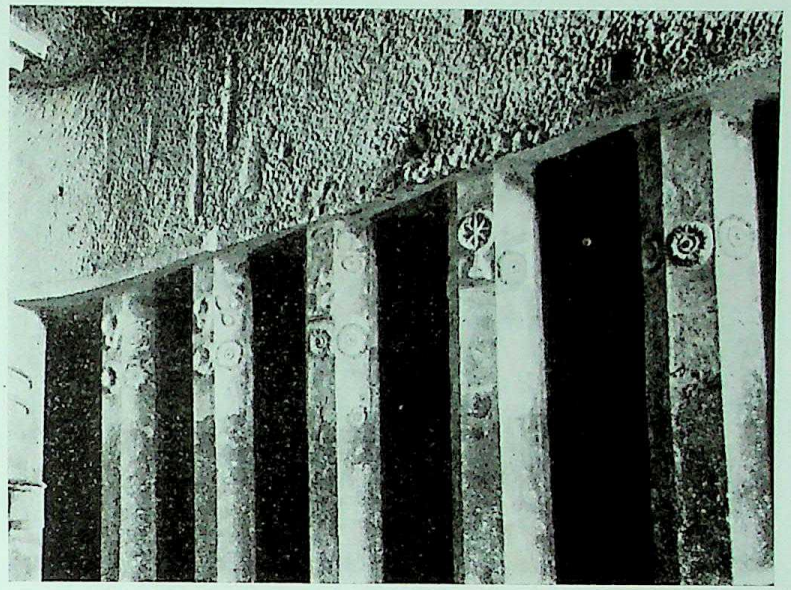
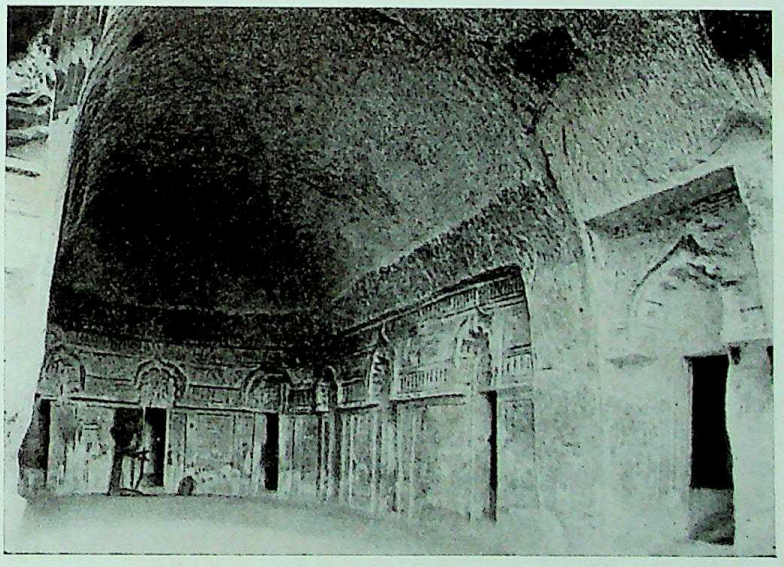


BAUDDHA SYMBOLS ON PILLARS OF CHAITYA.



INTERIOR OF VIHARA.

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"rail pattern." In the walls between the doors mock-grated windows are carved. The whole has been plastered, and probably painted, but it is now much smoked, some devotee having made his asylum in it and carved his patron divinity on the back wall, to which pūja is done by the villagers when they visit or pass the place. It has also suffered in the same way as the Chaitya from whitewashing.

Beyond this to the east are two or three small excavations of no importance or interest.

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CHAPTER XI.

THE CAVES OF JUNNAR.

JUNNAR is situated 56 miles to the north of Poona with which it is connected by a good metalled road. It is a town of considerable age and was originally of far greater importance than Poona. Round this old city are various groups of caves, making altogether nearly two hundred excavations, many of which are however only small cells or Bhikshu-grihas.

Like all the older caves in the west, those of Junnar are remarkably devoid of figure ornament, or imagery, and belong to the Hināyāna sect. The ornaments are the Chaitya-window, the "Buddhist rail pattern" and the Dāgoba. Elephants, tigers and other animals appear on the capitals in one or two caves.

Although none of these caves can compare either in magnificence or interest with the Chaityas of Bhāja or Karli, the forms are still full of instruction to the student of cave architecture. The groups contain specimens of almost every variety of rock-cut temple, and several forms not met elsewhere, and though plainer than most of those executed afterwards are still not devoid of ornament. They form, in fact, an intermediate step between the puritanical plainness of the Kathiāwār groups and those of the age that succeeded them. It is not easy to speak with any precision with regard to the age of these groups. Many inscriptions are to be found, but they mostly record the pious acts of devotees and do not allude to any royal families or kings which

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would give us a definite date. Some of the earliest as the Manmodi Chaitya No. XXXIX, for instance, may be 100 or 150 B.C., the other Chaitya in the Ganesh Lena group No. VI, on the contrary, may be A.D. 100 or 150 and between those two extremes the whole may be arranged from their styles without any material error being committed in so doing.

The caves may be divided generally into the following groups:—

1. Three groups in the Manmodi hill to the south of the town.
2. Several groups in the Shivneri hill south-west of Junnar.
3. The Tūlja Lena group to the west.
4. The Ganesh Lena group in the Sulaimān hills to the north and a second small group about a mile to the east of these in the same hills.

The Manmodi hill lies to the south-south-west of Junnar and about a mile to the west of the main road. A track leaves the road at a village at the 52½ milestone, and it is possible to drive a car along this to the foot of the hill from which an easy pathway leads to the most easterly group known as the Bhimarshankar Lena. Here we first come to a small vihāra and an unfinished Chaitya. The vihāra has the usual Nāsik pattern pillars but without animal figures above; the Chaitya has the usual pattern of window, but with no carving. The hall is 33 feet deep and 12 feet wide, and at the back is a mass of rock from which it may have been intended to carve the Dāgoba, but the rock at the back of this is very rotten, which may account for the stoppage of the work. On the face of this mass has been sketched out a squatting figure, probably at some latter date. Following the pathway

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round the hill to the north we pass several small cells, the most northerly of which contains an inscription of which the translation is "Ayama the minister of Mahakshatrapa Svami Nāhapāna." This mention of Nāhapāna is interesting, his date is still uncertain but was probably a little before A.D. 120. At a distance of a little over a quarter of a mile we reach the second group known as the Ambiki Lena. These are numbered XVII to XXXIII.

The chief of this group is an unfinished Chaitya cave, a fault in the rock being the reason for stopping work. The cave appears to be modelled on the Chaitya at Bedsa, which if finished it would have resembled. It has two octagonal pillars in front supporting the entablature of the great window. The aisles have not been commenced; the capital of the Dāgoba is roughly blocked out, and portions of a square mass of rock from which to hew out the base. To the east side of this cave is a cell, No. XXIV, containing a Dāgoba, the Chhatri or umbrella carved on the roof, but the staff has been broken. Above this and a little to the left, approached by a circular stairway are some cells containing some defaced images of doubtful age. This is now dedicated to Ambiki, but worship is being stopped. The remainder of the group consists of cells and small vihāras, almost devoid of ornamentation except for the "rail pattern."

Continuing along the pathway for about half a mile, we reach the third or western group in this hill, known as the Ambalya. The principal cave here No. XXXIX is an unfinished Chaitya cave. The door is nearly the whole width of the nave and it has apparently had a small semi-circular aperture or window over it, but the lintel is broken away. This arch of the window, however, is not adjusted to the arch of the roof inside, which is much higher, nor does it occupy the relative

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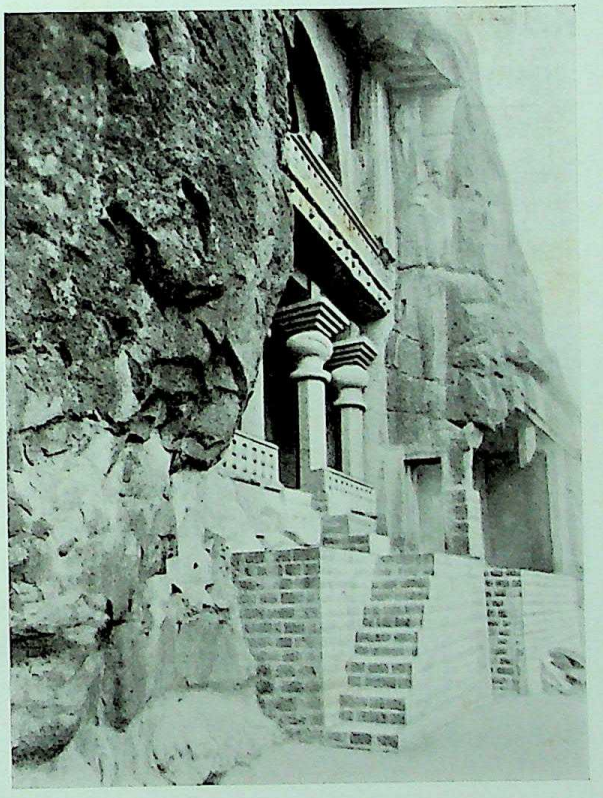
JUNNAR.

MANMODI HILL, GENERAL VIEW.



BHIMARSHANKAR CHAITYA CAVE II.

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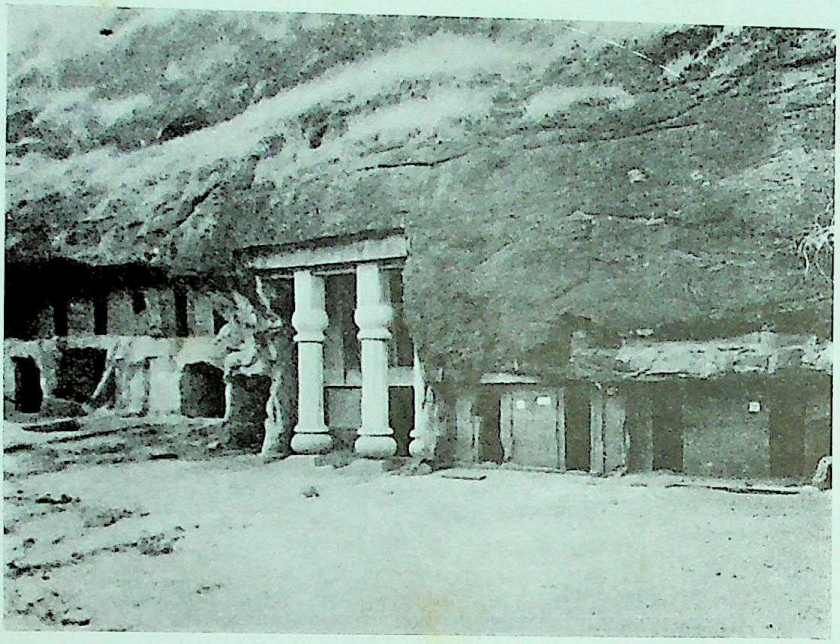
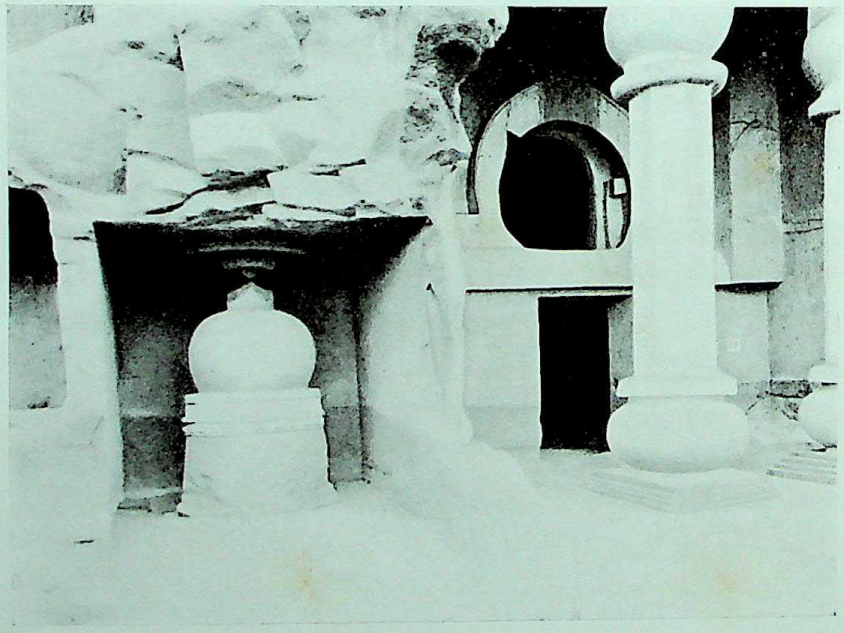
PLATE XXVII.

JUNNAR.



AMBIKI GROUP FROM WEST.



CAVES XXIV AND XXV.
AMBIKI GROUP.

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position in the great arch on the façade assigned to the window in later examples at Ajanta, Nāsik, etc. Over the opening the place usually occupied by the window is divided fanwise into seven petal-shaped compartments with a semi-circular centre round the edge of the inner member of which is an inscription, in one line, of Mauryan characters indicating a date not later than 100 B.C. The illustration shows clearly the style of the ornamentation of the façade. Inside the cave, three octagonal pillars have been blocked out, and those on the left have been indicated. The Dāgoba has also been started, but without the capital. A diagonal soft stratum in the rock has probably lead to the work being relinquished in its present unfinished state. This is much to be regretted, as the whole design of this cave is certainly the most daring, though it can hardly be called the most successful attempt on the part of the early cave architects to emancipate themselves from the trammels of the wooden style they were trying to adopt to lithic purposes. Higher up on the rock, on the east side of this, are four cells with neatly carved façades, each door having a Chaitya-window arch over it, projecting about 15 inches, while it is also ornamented with Dāgobas in half relief and the "Buddhist rail pattern." In addition there are several more small cells and a small vihāra with two cells in each wall, but the front has gone.

The Shivneri hill fort, the birth-place of Sivaji Bhonsle, the Māratha champion, lies to the south-west of the town, and can be approached either from the northern or south-eastern spur. The hill is triangular in shape and caves are to be found on each face. They are mostly small cells and vihāras, but there are also some Chaitya caves with special features. Ascending the hill by a pathway leading up the south-east spur we reach several cells in the lower scarp, and then a cave which has

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originally had two columns with corresponding pilasters in front of a narrow verandah. The cave has a wide door, and is a large square cell containing the cylindrical base of a Dāgoba, coarsely hewn out. It is possible that the top or garbha may have been of brick or wood. On the sides of the scarp to the north of these excavations are several water cisterns. On attaining the base of the upper scarp, at the south end, there is a cave of two storeys with a stair in the north and leading to the upper floor. It has been a small hall, of which the front is now entirely gone. In the south wall is a small recess roughly excavated, and over it, near the roof, is an inscription in one line, of deeply incised letters. At the beginning of it the same shield ornament occurs which marks the commencement of the Aira inscription on the Hāthi Gumpha near Cuttack and which occurs so frequently among Buddhist symbols at an early age. The character of the letters are not so old as those employed at Udāyāgiri, but still certainly before the Christian era.

On the south face of the hill are a few small cells and a small Chaitya cave with no striking features. Following the path northwards along the face of the hills there is a vihāra the whole front of which is open and some distance from this still further northwards we come to a vihāra known as the Bāra Kotri, so called from the fact that it has twelve cells. Here again are several small cells and a Chaitya cave. These also must have all had wooden fronts including the Chaitya, as the sockets for wooden frames can be seen on the floor and the upper part of the front.

The Chaitya cave, No. XLVIII, is a lofty flat-roofed excavation. The front wall was probably originally pierced only for two windows and the central door, but the sill of the south window has been cut away until it also forms a door. Inside is an

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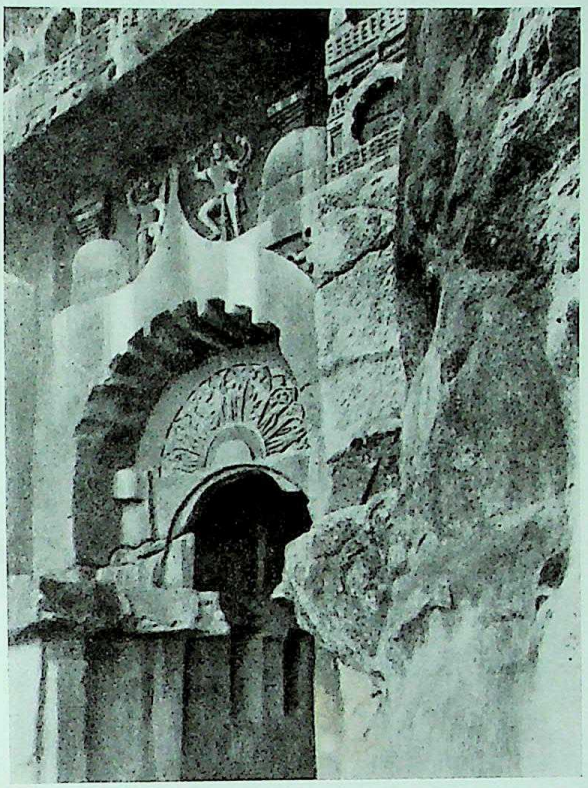
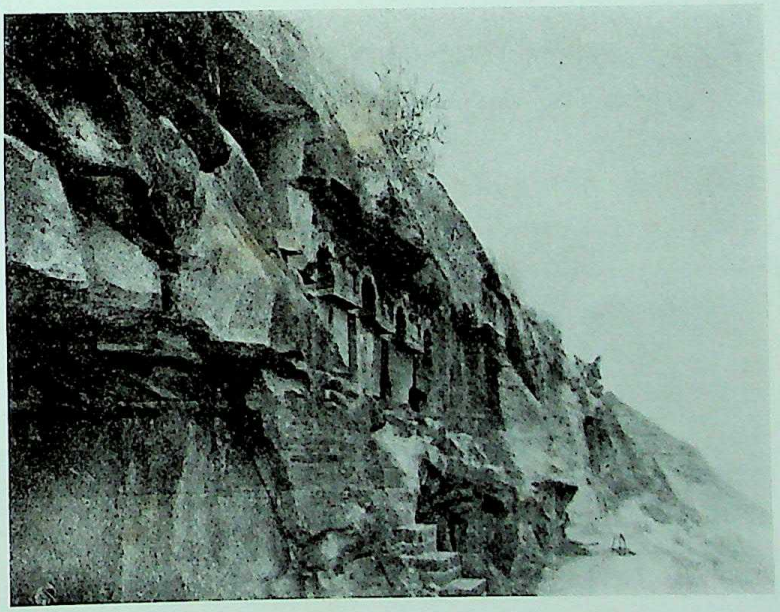
JUNNAR.



CHAITYA CAVE XXXIX.



CAVES XXXV TO XL.
AMBALYA GROUP.

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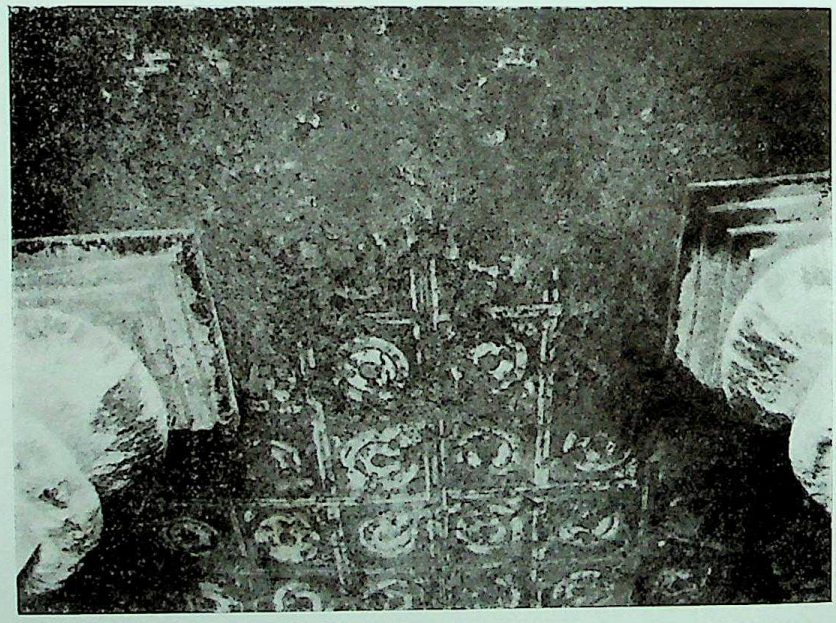
PLATE XXIX.

JUNNAR.

DAGOBA IN CHAITYA CAVE XLVII.



CEILING OF CHAITYA CAVE XLVII SHOWING PAINTING.
SHIVNERI HILL.

[Facing page 61]

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outer cross aisle or vestibule, separated from the hall by two free standing and two attached pillars, with water-jar bases and capitals as at Nāsik. The inner hall is 31 feet in length and 20½ feet wide, and about 18 feet high. Near the back of it stands a well-proportioned Dāgoba with "rail pattern" ornamentation round a portion of the top of the base. The umbrella, as in the oldest Chaityas, is carved on the roof, and connected with the capital by a short stone shaft. The ceiling has been neatly painted, and still retains large portions of the colouring; the design is in squares, each containing concentric circles in orange, brown, and white.

On the left of this Chaitya is a small vihāra with three cells in the left wall and two in the back and a Dāgoba in half *rilievo* in a recess, a not uncommon feature in the very oldest caves. We can now descend the hill by a pathway which leads to the foot of the north end of the spur where it joins the main road into the town.

There is a small group of caves at the north end of the western face, difficult of access, as up to the present no pathway has been made to them. This consists of a vihāra, on the roof of which is a small fragment of frescoe-painting just sufficient to show that it has been coloured in the same style as the Chaitya cave No. XLVI, and there are also a few other small cells in no way remarkable.

On the summit of the hill is a large tank of a doubtful date, but the method of cutting this out seems to resemble so much that used by the cave excavators that it is possible it was a water supply used in conjunction with the caves.

The Tūlja Lena group is situated in the scarp of a hill two miles to the west of the town. A footpath leaves the road at the

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bend at the north end of the Shivneri hill, but it is possible to take a tonga or motor for a considerable distance along this. They are so named because one of them has been appropriated by the modern Brāhmans as a shrine of Tūlja Devi, a form of Bhāvani, the consort of Sītā.

The caves occupy the face of a cliff in the re-entrant of a nullah, the water of which when flowing passes over the façades to which it has naturally done considerable damage. They consist of a number of cells and two small vihāras, with a Chaitya cave of quite unique form. It is circular in plan, 25½ feet in diameter, with a Dāgoba in the centre surrounded by twelve plain octagonal pillars 11 feet high supporting a dome over the Dāgoba. The surrounding aisle is roofed by a half arch rising from the wall to the upper side of the architrave 7 or 8 inches deep over the pillars. The Dāgoba is quite plain and has apparently never had a capital, as in the top is a socket 6 inches square and 18 inches deep, to hold the shaft of a wooden capital or umbrella. To the right of this cave is the shrine of Tūlja Devi. Further along, the façades of all the caves have fallen away. Over the fronts of caves IX and X are left some Chaitya-window ornamentation.

The Sulaimān hills are situated due north of the town. A motor can be taken to the foot of the hill in which the main group is situated, the caves being reached by a stairway of 250 or so steps. There are a large number of small cells and vihāras in the group, the principal being the Chaitya cave No. VI and the vihāra now known as the Ganesh Lena which has now been appropriated for modern worship. The verandah in front of the Chaitya has two free standing and two attached pillars of the Nāsik style. These pillars are so similar in many other ways that they must be of about the same date as the Nāhapāna cave

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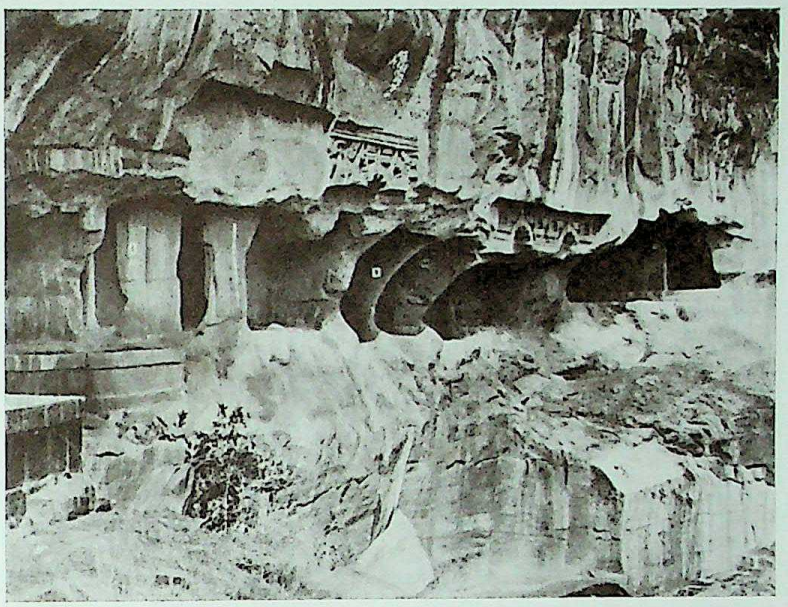
JUNNAR.



GENERAL VIEW.

CHAITYA CAVE III.
TULJA LENA GROUP.

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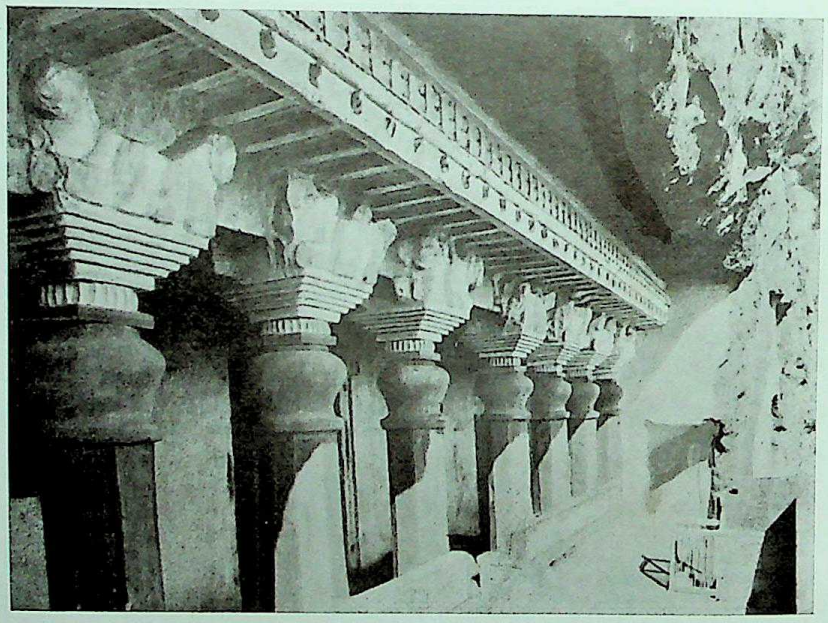
PLATE XXXI.

JUNNAR.

GENERAL VIEW FROM THE SOUTH.



GANESH LENA VIHARA CAVE VII.
SULAIMAN HILL.

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at that place. The cave is about 13 feet broad, and 24 feet long up to the Dāgoba, limited on each side by five columns. Over the capitals are lions, tigers, and elephants. In the apse round the Dāgoba, about 3 feet from it, are six plain octagonal shafts, without base or capital. The aisle behind the pillars is 3 feet 6 inches wide, and is ribbed over, like the roof of the nave, in imitation of wooden ribs. The Dāgoba is of the usual form, a plain circular base with a Buddhist rail cornice supporting the garbha or dome on which stands the torān or capital, consisting of a square block representing a box also ornamented with the "Buddhist rail pattern," surmounted by an abacus of five thin slab-like members, with a hole in the centre of it, to support the shaft of a wooden umbrella, as at Karli, and four shallow square ones for relics, for it was on this torān, as on an altar, that the relics of Bauddha saints were deposited for adoration. In some cases, as at Bhāja, the box under the capital was hollow, for the preservation of the relics. Though so small, this is one of the most perfect Chaityas to be found anywhere. Its proportions are good, and all those details which were employed tentatively at Karli and in the earlier caves are here well understood and applied without hesitation. It is, too, the earliest instance known in which not only the ribs of the aisles but those of the nave are in stone, and nothing was in wood but the umbrella, now removed. It is the best example of the perfected Chaitya of the first century of the Christian era.

To the west of the Chaitya cave is a staircase leading to the Ganesh Lena. The hall is 50 feet by 56 feet and 10 feet high with no pillars or support. There are three doors and two windows in front, and a stone seat round the three inner sides. It has seven cells on each side, and five at the back, the central one altered to make a shrine for the god, whose large image is

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cut out of the rock, probably from a Dāgoba in *rilievo* that may originally have occupied this cell. Outside the cave is a narrow verandah, with six free and two attached pillars, rising from a bench as in cave III at Nāsik. The back of this forms the upper part of a basement, carved with the "Buddhist rail pattern."

The next seven are mostly small cells and without interest.

Cave XV is a rectangular, flat-roofed, Chaitya cave, 22 feet deep and nearly 13 feet wide, with a Dāgoba standing 3 feet from the back wall, the capital of which is connected with the roof by the stone shaft of the umbrella which is carved on the roof. The extreme simplicity of this arrangement and of everything about this cave seems to mark it as the earliest Chaitya cave in the group, or perhaps in any of the various groups around Junnar. On the left of the door, outside, is an inscription in two lines, in the old square Pāli character, and consequently probably at least 100 B.C.

Eleven or more small cells with some cisterns and inscriptions extend to the west along the face of the cliff beyond this.

Another small group of caves is situated in the same hill to the east, about a mile from the Ganesh Lena group. Here there is a small Chaitya cave only 8 feet wide and 22 feet in length containing a Dāgoba. The walls are not straight nor the floor level. The side aisles have not been begun, and altogether no part of the interior is quite finished, except the upper part of the Dāgoba. Outside, the façade is carved with Chaitya-window ornaments, some enclosing a Dāgoba, and others a lotus flower, while the "rail ornament" is abundantly interspersed in the usual way. Besides this cave there are a few small cells and a small vihāra.

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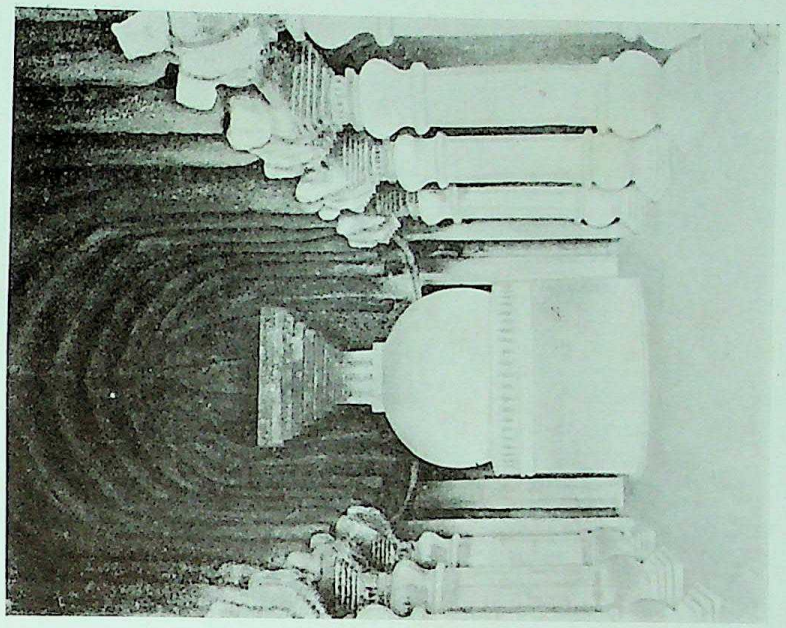
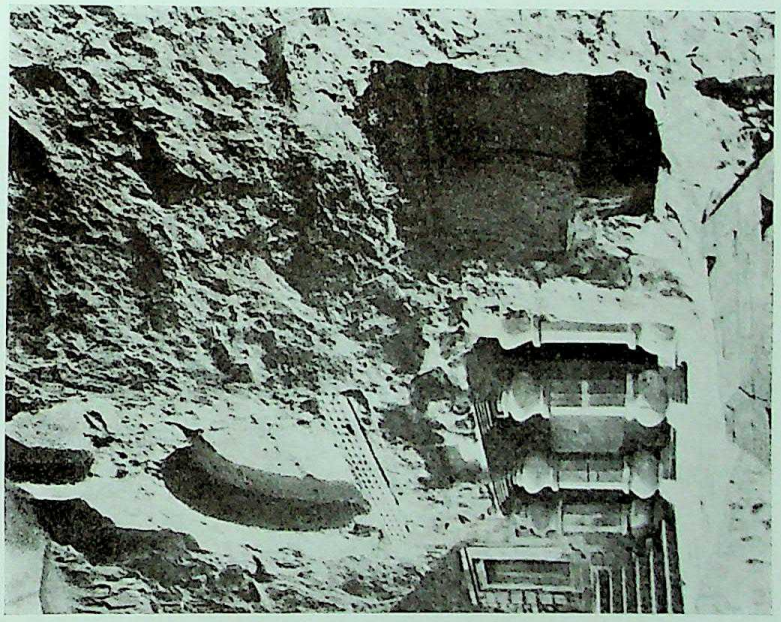
JUNNAR.



CHAITYA CAVE VI, INTERIOR.



CHAITYA CAVE VI, EXTERIOR.

SULAIMAN HILL.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE CAVES OF NASIK.

THE Buddhist caves, locally known as the Pandu Lena, are in one of the three isolated hills called in the inscriptions Trirasmi, close to the Bombay road and about five miles south-south-west from the town. They are situated about 300 feet above the level of the plain and are easily approached by a pathway leading from the road, a distance of about half a mile.

They are almost entirely of an early date and were excavated by the Hināyāna sect, the first great division of Buddhists, being originally devoid of images or any representation of Buddha as an object of worship, or in fact of any of those characteristics which marked the introduction of the Mahāyāna theosophy. There are altogether twenty-three excavations though many of these are small and unimportant. The earliest is probably the Chaitya cave dating from about the Christian era. Besides this cave there are four vihāras all of which will be described in turn. Considerable damage has been done by weather and also by blasting at a more recent date, though who were the authors of this vandalism it is not now possible to say.

Starting from the west, cave No. I has been planned for a vihāra and except for the ornamental frieze over the front part of the excavation, no part of it is finished.

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Cave No. II is a small excavation which has additions by the later Mahāyāna Buddhists of the sixth or seventh century. The verandah has apparently had two wooden pillars, and the projecting frieze is carved with the "rail pattern," much weather worn, and apparently very old. Between this and the next are a tank with two openings above it, a large carved-out place, and two decayed recesses, one of them a tank, and all along this space are blocks of rock blasted out, or fallen down from above.

Cave No. III is a large vihāra, the hall of which is 41 feet wide and 46 feet deep, with a bench round three sides, and eighteen cells, seven on the right side, six in the back, and five in the left, besides two openings from the verandah. The central door into this is rudely sculptured in a style similar to the Sānchi gateways; the side pilasters are divided into six compartments, each filled mostly with two men and a woman, in different stages of some story which seems to end in the woman being carried off by one of the men. It is difficult to say whether this has any relation to the abduction scene in the Udāyāgiri caves. Over the door are the three symbols, the Bodhi tree, the Dāgoba, and the Chakra, with worshippers, and at each side is a dwarpāla, or doorkeeper, of very ungainly proportions holding up a bunch of flowers. If the carving on this door be compared with any of those at Ajanta it will be found very much ruder and less bold, but the style of the head-dress agrees with that on the screen walls at Karli and Kānheri, and in the paintings in cave No. X at Ajanta which probably belong to about the same age. On the back wall has been carved a Dāgoba mounted with a capital and ornamental umbrellas. This cave was excavated by Yajna Satakarni Gautamiputra, one of the Andhra Kings, ruling from A.D. 172

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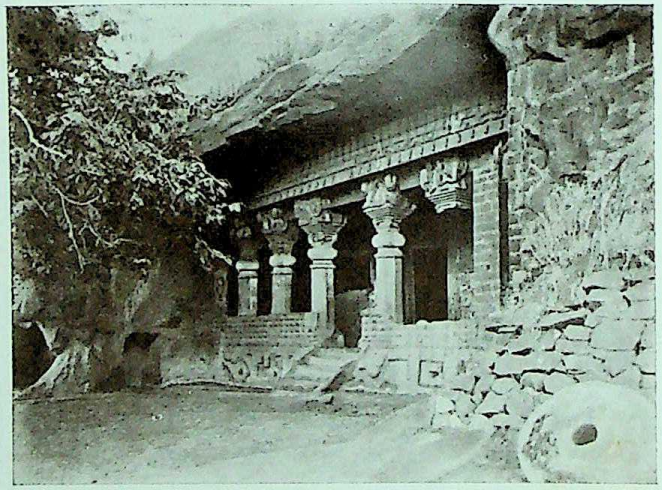
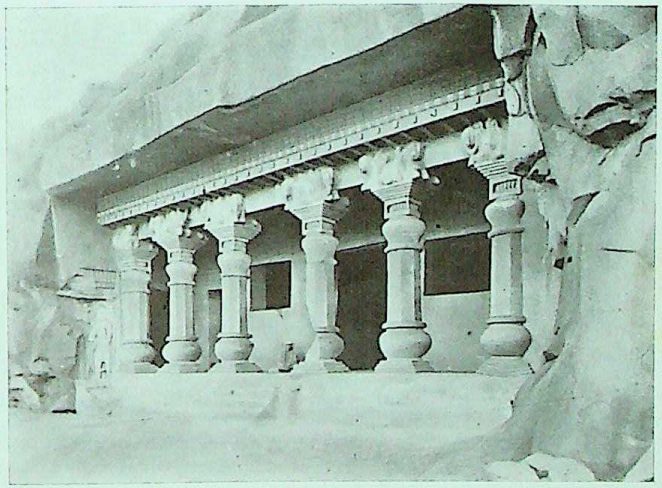
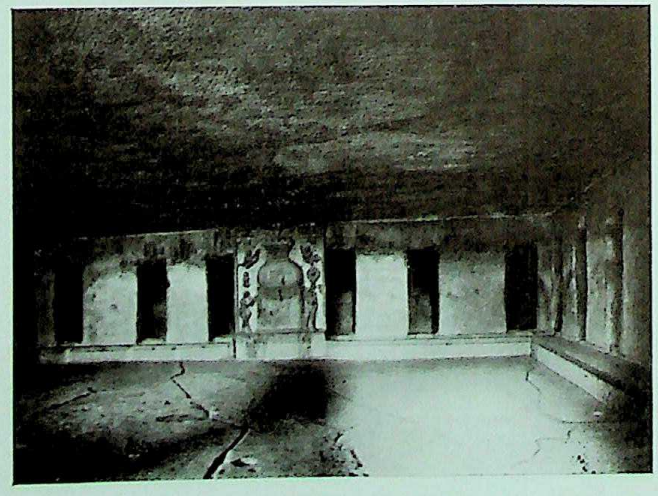
NASIK.



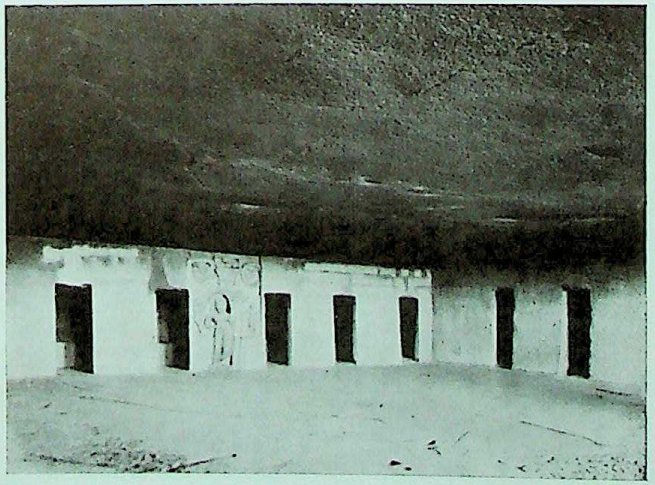
GAUTAMIPUTRA VIHARA CAVE III EXTERIOR.



NAHAPANA VIHARA CAVE X EXTERIOR.



GAUTAMIPUTRA VIHARA CAVE III INTERIOR.



NAHAPANA VIHARA CAVE X INTERIOR.

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PLATE XXXIV.

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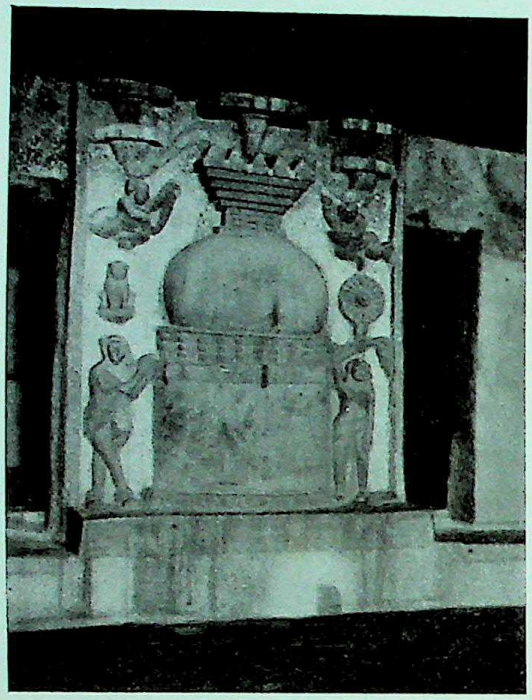
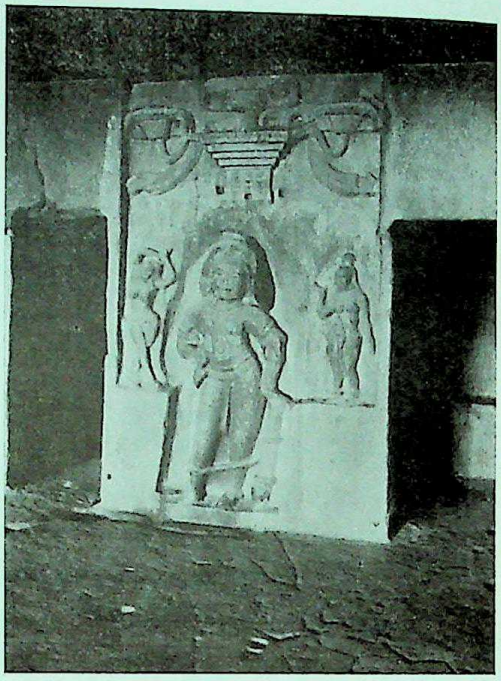
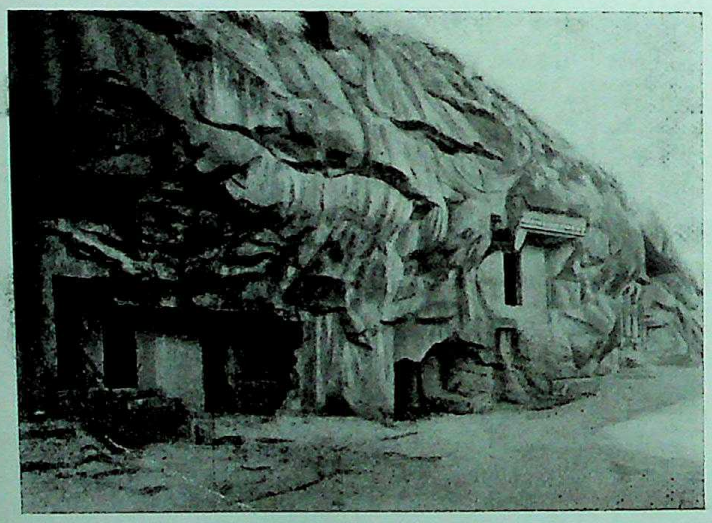


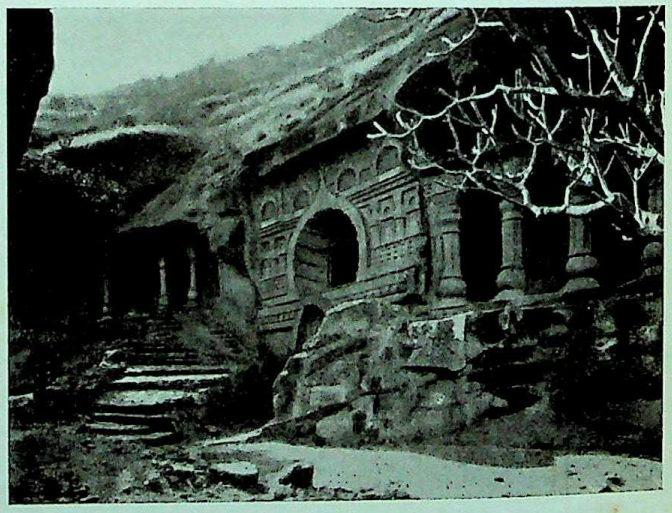
CAVE III. DAGOBA ON BACK WALL.



CAVE X. FIGURE OF BHAIRAVA ON BACK WALL CARVED LATER IN PLACE OF ORIGINAL DAGOBA.



CAVES XIV, XIII, XII, XI, X.



CAVES XX, XVIII, XVII.

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to 191. The verandah has six octagonal columns without bases between highly sculptured pilasters. The capitals of these pilasters are distinguished from those in the Nāhapāna cave No. X by the shorter and less elegant form of the bell-shaped portion of them, and by the corners of the frame that encloses the torus having small figures attached. The upper part of the frieze in this case is richly carved with a string course of animals under a richly carved rail, resembling the rails at Amrāvati, with which this vihāra must be nearly, if not quite, contemporary. The details of this cave and No. X are so alike that the one must be regarded as a copy of the other. This one being of a later date than No. X shows that the art has begun to decay.

Between this and cave No. X are several small caves and excavations of little importance.

Cave No. X is the second large vihāra and contains six inscriptions of the family of Nāhapāna, who reigned at Ujjain before the year A.D. 120. The pillars of the verandah, as already remarked, have more elegant bell-shaped Persian capitals than those in cave No. III and their bases are in the style of those in the Karli Chaitya, and in that next to the Ganesh Lena at Junnar. The hall is about 43 feet wide by 45 feet deep, and is entered by three plain doors, and lighted by two windows. It has five benched cells on each side and six in the back. On the back wall, as shown by the capital and ornamental umbrellas still left, it has had a precisely similar Dāgoba in bas-relief as found in cave No. III, but in this case it has been at a much later date hewn into a figure of Bhairāva. This is very clearly shown when the illustrations of the two Dāgobas are compared. Outside the verandah too,

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on the left-hand side, are two *rilievos* of this same god, evidently the later insertions of some Hindu devotee.

Between this and cave No. XVII are again groups of small excavations some containing images of a later date, but of little interest, and much damage has been done here by blasting and weather.

Cave No. XVII has been excavated close to the upper portion of the Chaitya cave. The hall measures 23 feet wide by 32 feet deep and has a back aisle screened off by two columns, of which the elephants and their riders and the thin square members of the capitals only are finished. The verandah is somewhat peculiar, and it would seem that, at first, a much smaller cave was projected, or else by some mistake it was begun too far to the left. It is reached by half a dozen steps in front between the two central octagonal pillars with very short shafts, and large bases and capitals, the latter surmounted by elephants and their riders and the frieze above carved with the plain "rail pattern." On the wall of the back aisle is a standing figure of Buddha, 3½ feet high; in the left side of the hall, 2 feet from the ground, is a recess, 18 feet long and 4 feet high by 2 feet deep, intended for a seat or perhaps for a row of metallic images; a cell has been attempted at each end of this, but one of them has entered the aisle of the Chaitya cave just below, and the work has then been stopped. On the right side are four cells without benches. There is an inscription which tells us that the cave was the work of "Indrangnidatta, the son of Dharma-deva, a Northerner, a Yāvana (or Greek), a native of Dattamatri (in the Sauvira country)." But inscriptions like this do not help us much as to dates, and all that can be said of this cave is that the verandah is a little later in type than the Nāhapāna cave No. X, and the interior was

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NASIK.

VIHARA CAVE XVII EXTERIOR.

VIHARA CAVE XX INTERIOR.

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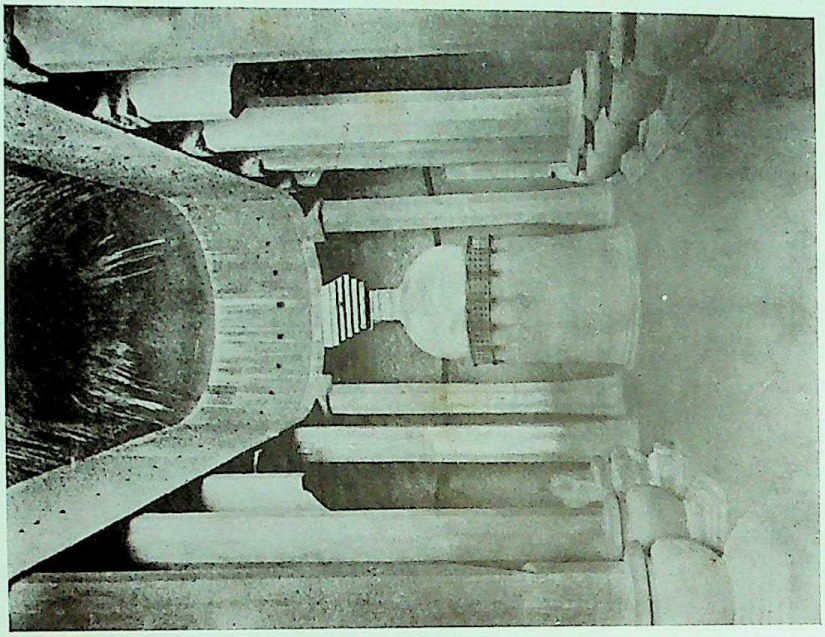
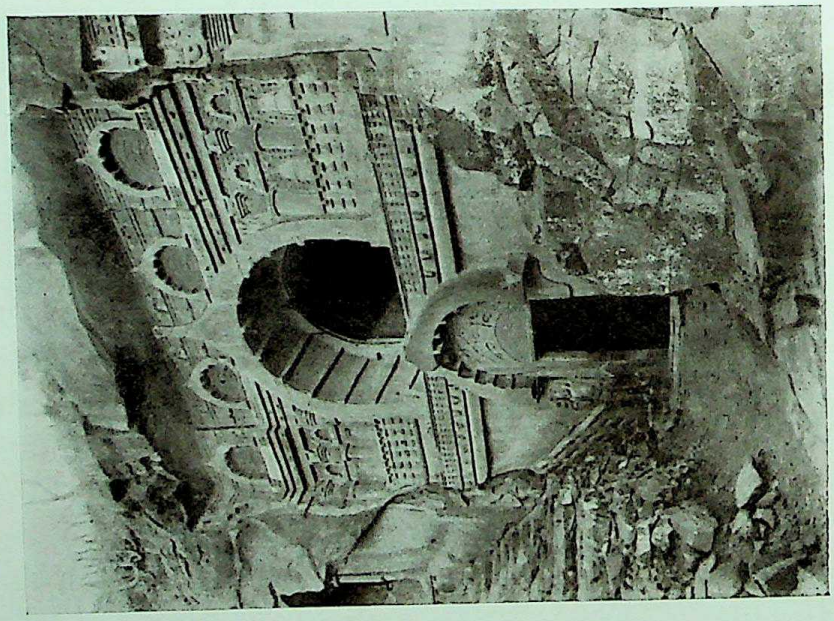


CHAITYA CAVE XVIII INTERIOR.



CHAITYA CAVE XVIII EXTERIOR.

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excavated at a much later date or about the early part of the sixth century when image-worship had gained full ascendancy among the Mahāyāna Buddhists.

Cave No. XVII. The only Chaitya cave of the group belongs to a very much earlier date, and it may be placed at some period about or before the Christian era. The carving, however, over the door and the pilasters with animal capitals on the façade on each side of the great arch, and the insertion of the hooded snake, will, on comparison with the façades at Bedsa and Karli, tend to lead us to an early date for this cave; the interior is severely simple, and there are hardly sufficient departures from the earlier forms in the ornamentation to lead us to assign it to a much later date than the Bedsa Chaitya cave and it may probably be ascribed to the century before, but not distant from the Christian era, the date to which it would seem the next cave also belongs. The doorway is evidently of an early date and the ornament up the left side is almost identical to the northern gateway at Sānchi with which it consequently is in all probability contemporary. The cylinder of the Dāgoba is 5½ feet in diameter and 6 feet 3 inches high, surmounted by a small dome and very heavy capital. The gallery under the great arch of the window is supported by two pillars, which in all cases in the Chaitya caves are in such a form as strongly to suggest that a wooden frame was fastened between them, probably to hold a screen, which would effectually shut in the nave from observation from outside.

Cave No. XIX is at a rather lower level even than the Chaitya cave and some distance in advance of it. It was a small vihāra probably of about the second century. Over this last

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and close by the Chaitya cave, from which it is approached by a stair is cave No. XX, another larger vihāra, its hall varying in width from 37 feet at the front to 44 feet at the back and 61 feet deep. Originally it was little over 40 feet deep, but at a much later date it was altered and extended by one "Marma, a worshipper," as recorded on the wall. It has eight cells on each side, while at the back are two cells to the left of the ante-chamber and one to the right, with one more on each side of the ante-chamber and entered from it. The ante-chamber is slightly raised above the level of the hall, from which it is divided by two richly carved columns between antae. On either side of the shrine door is a gigantic dwarpāla 9½ feet high, with an attendant female, but so besmeared with soot, for the cave has been long occupied by Bhairāvas, that minor details are scarcely recognisable. In the shrine, too, is the colossal image of Buddha, 10 feet high, seated with his feet on a lotus flower and holding the little finger of his left hand between the thumb and forefinger of his right, known as the Dharma-Chakra Mudra, or attitude of "turning the Wheel of the Law." He is attended by two gigantic chauri-bearers with the same distinguishing features as the dwarpāla. All this points to the seventh century A.D. as the age of alteration of this cave. An inscription of the seventh year of Yajna Satakarni Gautamiputra, which would be A.D. 179, states that "after having been under excavation for many years" it was then carried to completion by the wife of the Commander-in-Chief. This inscription therefore probably refers to the original cave before the alterations were completed. Beyond this cave are again a few decayed chambers some half finished; the rock has been much blasted and quarried away.

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Cave No. XXIII. Some 30 yards farther on is an irregular structure the front portions of which may have been made of wood, the whole façade has been destroyed. In front are several cisterns, on the floor is a raised stone bench and a circular base as if for a small structural Dāgoba. All the shrines, as well as many compartments on the walls, are filled with sculptures of Buddha attended by Padmapāni and Vajrapāni, such as are only met with here in the two shrines high up on the scarp at cave No. XIV, but so like what is found in Aurangābād, Ellora and Ajanta, that there can be no hesitation in ascribing them to a late age. The pillars in front of the entrance to the first shrine are also of a much more modern type than in any of the other caves here. Inside are images of Buddha both in the Dharma-Chakra Mudra and Dhyāna Mudra. An interesting feature in the case of the former being that the Buddha is here depicted wearing a moustache. Farther on is a small rude chamber much ruined, and 45 yards from it is a recess with an inscription over it of Palumai, the son of Vasishthi; 20 or 25 yards beyond, along a difficult scarp, was a small Bhikshu's house, the lower part of which has all been quarried away. The frieze is still fairly entire, and whilst preserving the copies of wooden forms, it is ornamented as that in the cave No. I.

Besides the actual caves described there are many water tanks and cisterns chiefly in conjunction with the caves. These caves like those at Kānheri belong principally to the times of the Kshahrata kings of Central India and the Andrabritya kings of the Deccan.

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE CAVES OF KANHERI.

About 20 miles to the north of Bombay is situated a very large group of caves known as Kānheri, and which must have at some time been in occupation as a residential city for monks of the Buddhist faith for a considerable number of years. It is probably owing to the fact that the road from Borivli Station on the B. B. and C. I. Railway, some five miles to the west, being unmetalled and impassable for motor cars, these caves have been very much neglected by the public and are so little known at the present day. In order to approach them it is necessary to either walk or take a bullock tonga from the station along a track, partly through fields and partly following a nullah bank, which ends about half a mile from the first cave. They are excavated in a large bubble of a hill, situated in the midst of an immense tract of forest country. Most of the hills in the neighbourhood are covered with the jungle, but this one is nearly bare, its summit being formed by one large rounded mass of compact rock, under which a softer stratum has in many places been washed out by the rains, forming natural caves; it is in the stratum again below this that most of the excavations are situated. The rock in which the caves have been excavated is a volcanic breccia, which forms the whole of the hilly district of the

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island, culminating to the north of the caves in a point about 1,550 feet above the sea level.

In so large a group there must be considerable differences in the ages of some of the excavations. The majority of the caves consists of a small single room usually with a little verandah in front and stone-beds in the cells.

As we approach from the west the first cave met with is a Chaitya very much unfinished, the interior being hardly excavated at all. It is of a late style of architecture, the columns of the verandah having square bases and compressed cushion-shaped capitals of the type found in the Elephanta cave. It is probably one of the latest excavations of any importance attempted in the hill, and may date as late as the ninth or tenth century A.D.

To the north of this cave is a large excavation containing three Dāgobas and some sculpture, but owing to the amount of weathering and the apparent alterations which have taken place at different times, it is difficult to give any definite date. We next come to the most important cave in the whole series, a Chaitya cave. It is obvious that this has been designed on the same principle as the great Chaitya at Karli, but is smaller and not so fine in any way. Fergusson's description of the cave cannot be bettered. He describes it as follows:—"This temple is 86½ feet long by 39 feet 10 inches wide from wall to wall and has 34 pillars round the nave and the Dāgoba, only six on one side and eleven on the other, having bases and capitals of the Karli Chaitya cave patterns, but not so well proportioned nor so spiritedly cut, while fifteen pillars round the apse are plain octagonal shafts. The Dāgoba is a very plain one nearly 16 feet in diameter,

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but its capital is destroyed; so also is all the woodwork of the arched roof. The aisle across the front is covered by a gallery under the great arched window, and probably the central portion of the verandah in front was also covered, but in wood. At the ends of this verandah are two colossal figures of Buddha, about 23 feet high, but these appear to be considerably later than the cave itself. The sculpture on the front screen wall is apparently a copy of that in the same position at Karli, but rather better executed, indeed, they are the best carved figures in these caves; the rock in this place happens to be peculiarly close grained, and the style of dress of the figures is that of the age of the great Satarkarnis. The ear-rings are heavy, and the turbans wrought with great care. This style of dress never occurs in any of the later caves or frescoes. They may, I think, with confidence be regarded as of the age of the cave. Not so with the images above them, among which are several of Buddha and two standing figures of the Bodhisattwa Avalokiteswara, which all may belong to a later period. So also does the figure of Buddha in the front wall at the left end of the verandah, under which is an inscription containing the name of Buddhaghosha, in letters of about the sixth century."

The verandah has two pillars in front, and the screen above them is carried up with five openings above. In the left side of the court are two rooms, one entered through the other, but evidently of later date than the cave. The outer one has a good deal of sculpture in it. On each side of the court is an attached pillar; on the top of that on the west side are four lions, as at Karli; on the other are three fat squat figures similar to those on the pillar in the court of the Jaina cave, known as Indra Sabha, at Ellora; these probably

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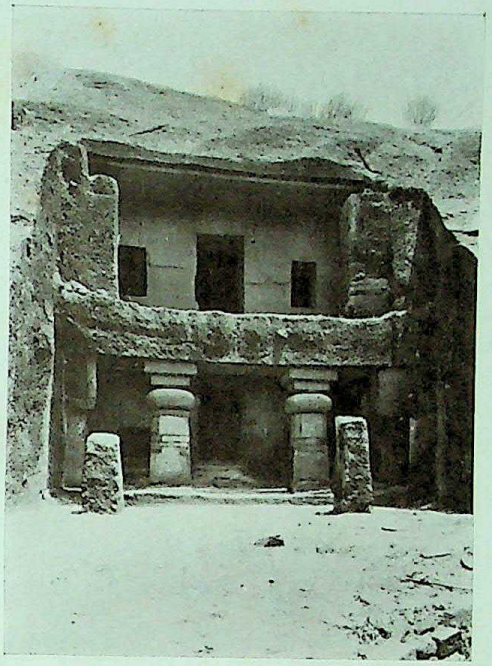
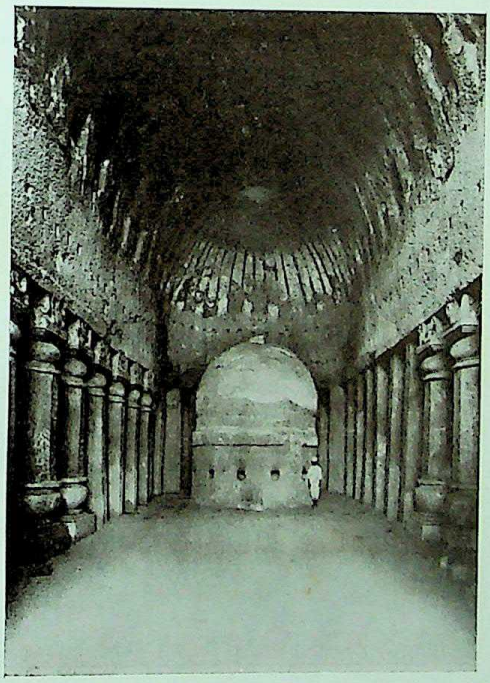
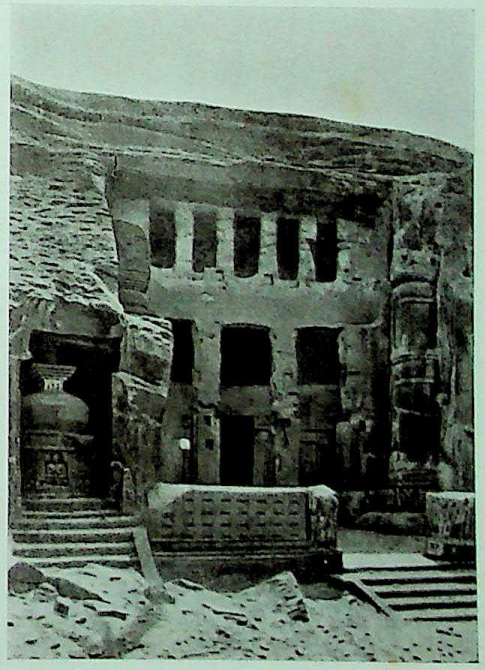
KANHERI.



CHAITYA CAVE I.



CHAITYA CAVE III INTERIOR.



CHAITYA CAVE III EXTERIOR.

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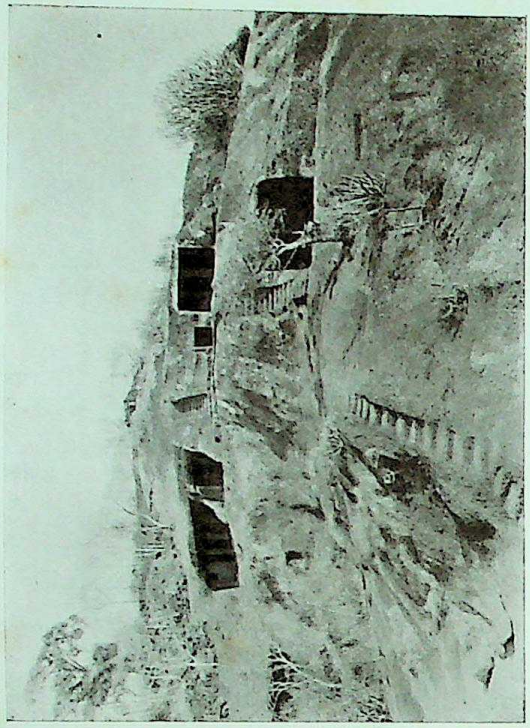
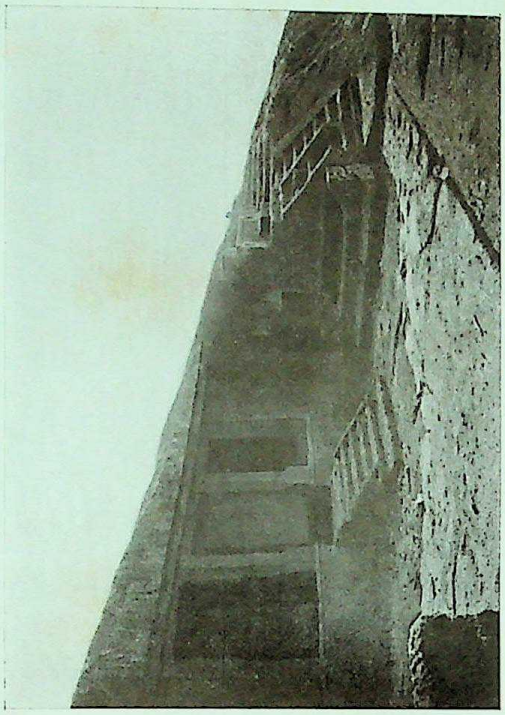
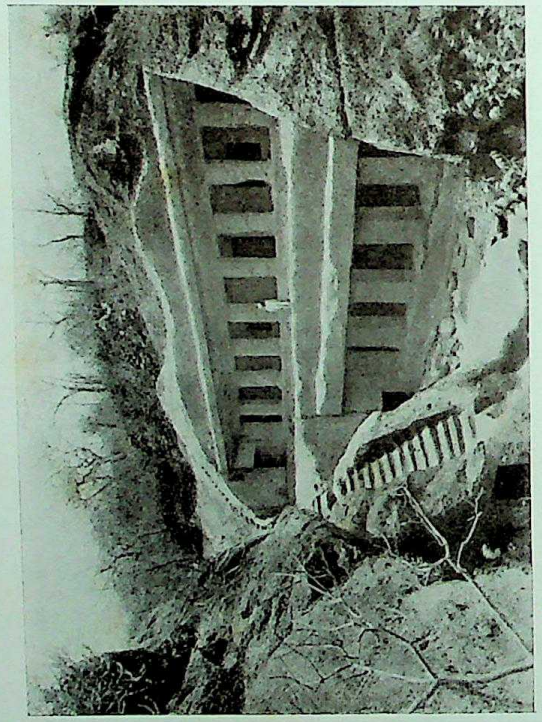
KANHERI.



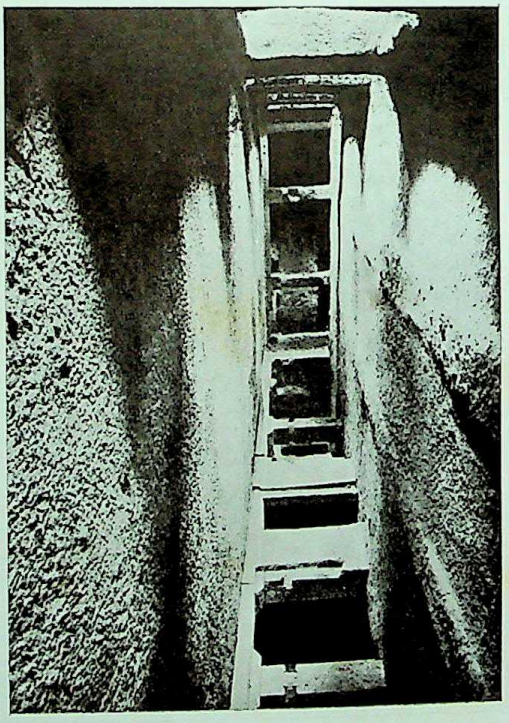
CAVES XXXII, XXXI AND XXX.



CAVE LVI.



MAHARAJAH OR DURBAR CAVE EXTERIOR.



MAHARAJAH OR DURBAR CAVE INTERIOR.

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supported a wheel. In front of the verandah there has been a wooden porch.

On the left of the court is a small circular cell containing a solid Dāgoba, from its position almost certainly of more ancient date than this cave.

As regards the actual date of this cave, it is very difficult to assign even a definite century. There is very much the same degradation of style between this cave and that at Karli as there is between the Nāhapāna and Gautamiputra cave at Nāsik, indeed, the screen in front of the cave here is so similar to that of the Gautamiputra that it would appear to be contemporary. In confirmation of this there is an inscription of Gautamiputra II from which we may assume that it was excavated towards the end of the second century, *i.e.*, at least 200 years after the Chaitya at Karli. Certain sculptures, however, as mentioned above in Fergusson's description, are probably of a still later date.

Leaving this cave the pathway turns up a ravine at the entrance of which are some small vihāras and after a short distance we come to cave No. X, the Great Mahārājah or Durbar Hall. There is very little carving in the interior of this cave, and from its general appearance it does not appear to be a vihāra in the ordinary sense of the word, and was probably used for convocations and was a Dharamsāla or a place of assembly. Running the full length of the hall are two slightly raised platforms, probably intended for the seating of the monks where they might discuss affairs of the assembly and listen to eminent teachers. It is situated on the south side of the ravine and directly opposite to it is a small cave with two pillars and two half ones in the verandah, having an inscription of about the ninth or

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tenth century on the frieze. Inside is a small hall with a rough cell at the back, containing only an image of Buddha on the back wall. For a considerable distance up this ravine are a series of small vihāras and cells, No. XVI, containing a Dāgoba with the umbrella carved on the roof and with the remains of painting similar to that in the Shivneri Chaitya at Junnar. Above the Durbar cave is cave No. XXXV, a large vihāra with a considerable amount of carvings of the late Mahāyāna style. On the south side of the ravine are several ranges of cells excavated in the slope of the hill one above the other, but the slope being gradual, they are in no way double storeyed. At the eastern end of the ravine are caves Nos. LXVI, LXVII and LXVIII being remarkable for the profusion of sculptures consisting chiefly of Buddhas and attendants, Dāgobas, etc. In cave No. LXVI is a fine sculpture of a litany in which the central figure of Avalokiteswara has a tall female on each side, and beyond each are five compartments, those on the right representing danger from the elephant, lion, snake, fire, and shipwreck; those on the left from imprisonment, Garūda, Sitāla or disease, sword, and some enemy not now recognisable owing to the abrasion of the stone. In cave No. LXVII is a similar litany representing Buddha seated on the Padmasan, or lotus throne, supported by two figures with snake hoods, and surrounded by attendants in the manner so usual in the Mahāyāna sculptures of a later age in these caves. There are more figures in this one than are generally found on these compositions, but they are all very like one another in their general characteristics.

One of the striking features of this series of excavations is the number of steps and paths many of which had hand-rails

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leading from cave to cave. Another feature is the number of stone seats outside the caves on which the monks could repose at leisure, and in many cases in front of the caves, it would appear that it was possible to add wooden structures which might be erected as an extra protection against either sun or rain. A third and very noticeable feature is the remarkably good system of water cisterns, nearly every cave being supplied with one or more and yielding throughout the year good pure water. In addition to the actual excavations there were originally quite a number of stūpas erected both in brick and stone. Now, however, only the remains of these can be seen, as in most cases they have either been rifled or excavated by archæologists in earlier days. From the conjunction of so many noticeable features, it may be concluded that here was a colony of monks who resided throughout the year for several centuries. This is not remarkable as even in these early times there were many towns and cities in the vicinity, and moreover it was a convenient place from which to start on various missions which the Buddhists are known to have done. It is to be hoped that in the near future a metalled road will be constructed within reasonable proximity of these caves in order that they may be approached with greater ease than at present, for like the smaller group at Māhakel they are probably almost unknown to the general population of Bombay.

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CHAPTER XIV.

THE CAVES OF MAHAKEL.

About 12 miles to the north of Bombay and 3 miles to the east of Andheri lies the small village of Marol. After proceeding along the road leading north for a mile and a half, on the left-hand side and half a mile across the fields is a hill in which is a group of Buddhist caves, most of which are situated on the eastern side. These caves were originally named by Fergusson and Burgess Kondiwte, but this is a misnomer. The area is known locally as Māhakel. They are in a state of fair preservation. Owing to the simplicity of most of the caves they must have been executed at an early date. They are chiefly in the form of small vihāras and few contain anything more than the simple "rail pattern" by way of ornament.

Starting from the south cave No. I is a small vihāra with a small verandah in front.

Cave No. II which measures 27 feet by 14 feet is another vihāra with numerous sockets in the side and a pedestal against the back wall over which very roughly incised is the outline of a Dāgoba, again with a number of sockets in a semi-circle over it. In the verandah are four square pillars standing on a platform carved with the "rail pattern" and in the floor there are holes cut into a water cistern. The next few caves are all small vihāras of much the same pattern.

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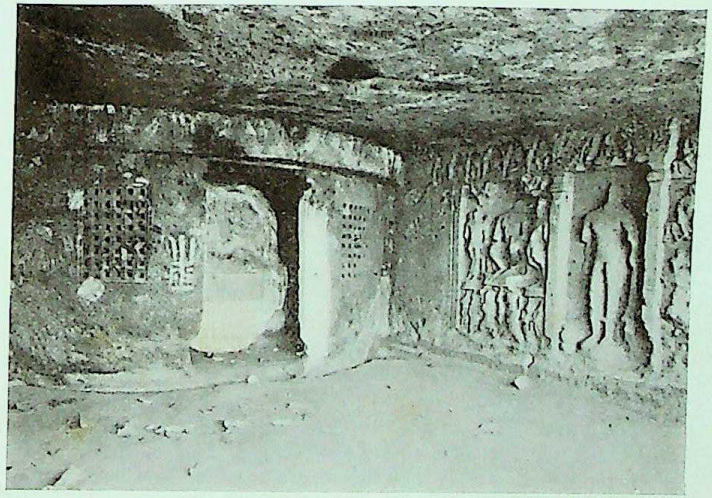
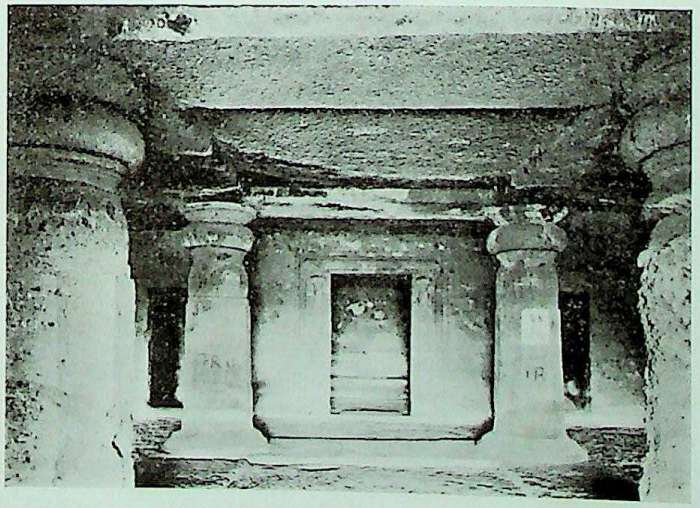
MAHAKEL.

General View.



Chaitya Cave VIII, Interior.

Caves I II III



Cave XIII, Interior.

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Cave No. VIII is of especial interest being a Chaitya of rather peculiar plan. It consists of a rectangular room with a Dāgoba in a circular domed chamber at the back. The wall in front of the Dāgoba cell is only about 8 inches thick and has a lattice window on each side of the door with an inscription over the one on the right. On the right wall there is some carving, figures of Buddha, but probably of a much later date than the original cave.

Proceeding farther to the north there are a few small cells, but the most northerly cave No. XIII is probably of a more recent date. It is a fairly large vihāra and is entered by steps up to a platform in front of the verandah over which the roof extends. The verandah has two pilasters and three doors leading to the hall, the roof of which is supported by four octagonal pillars dispersed in a square. These have low bases and capitals somewhat of the type found in the first two large Buddhist caves in Ellora. In each of the three inner walls are three cells, with benches of stone. The south end of the verandah has broken into one of the cells of the neighbouring cave which is obviously the older of the two. There are a few caves on the west side of the hill, but these are small and huddled together and of little importance.

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CHAPTER XV.

THE CAVES OF ELEPHANTA.

In the harbour of Bombay and about six miles east-north-east of the Apollo Bandar is the well-known island of Elephanta, the real name of which is Gharapuri. It was called Elephanta by the Portuguese owing to the fact that when they found the place there was a large stone elephant standing at the entrance to the great cave. The British tried to remove this stone elephant but while removing it the crane chain gave way and the rock broke and in 1864 what remained of the rock was removed to the Victoria Gardens. A group of caves is situated at a level of 250 feet above the water level on the north-west side of the island. This group of caves owing to the predominating one being Brāhmanical is omitted from the Buddhist lists though there are obvious signs that originally one at least must have been made by the great cave makers. Ascending the steps from the landing stage the first cave we approach is the great Brāhmanical cave, a short description of which will be given later. Proceeding round the point of the hill to the north-eastern face there are three caves here in a somewhat dilapidated state the most easterly of which has over one of the windows the remains of Chaitya pattern window carvings and Buddhist "rail pattern." It is impossible owing to the large amount of later work which has been done both at this cave and at the others to give any date

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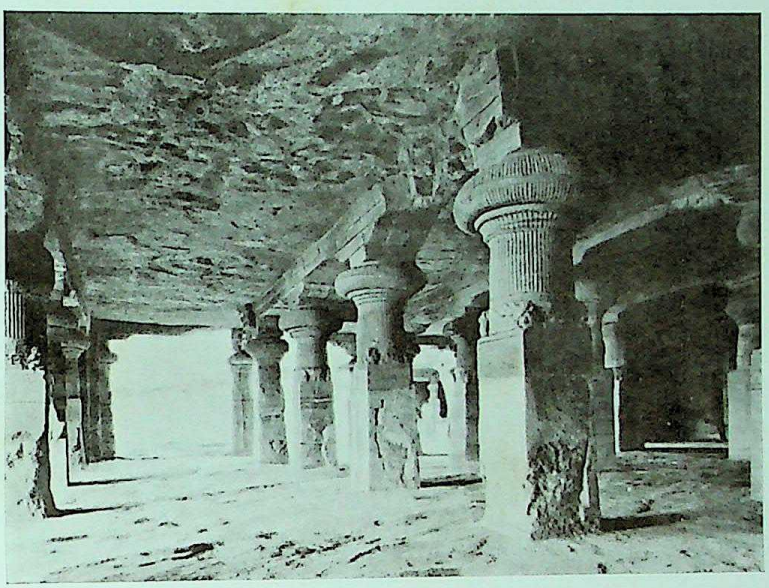
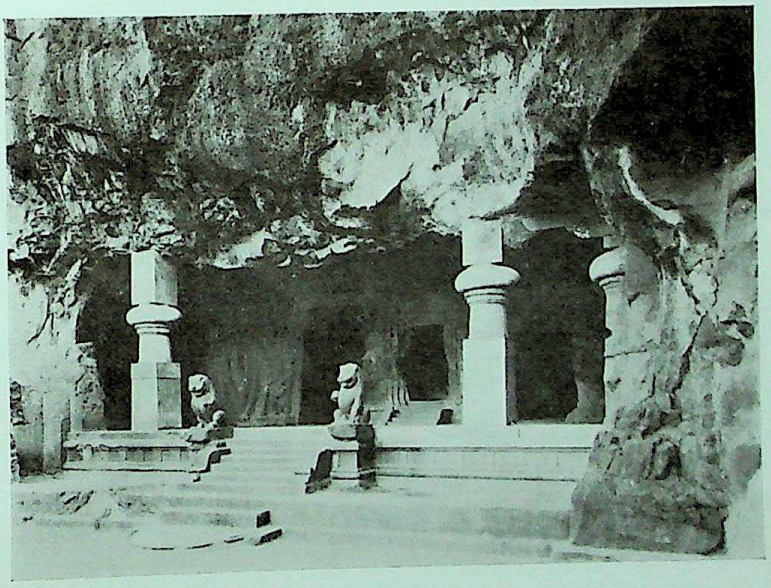
ELEPHANTA.



THE MAIN HALL, BRAHMANICAL CAVE.



EASTERN PORTICO, BRAHMANICAL CAVE.

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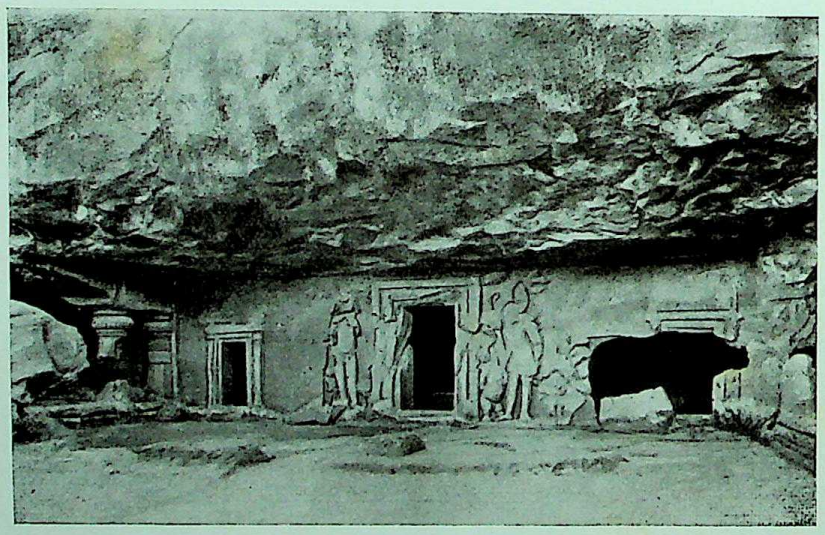
ELEPHANTA.

THE TRIMURTHI.



CAVE WITH BUDDHIST CHAITYA WINDOW CARVINGS OVER RIGHT WINDOW.

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as to the origin of this cave, but that it must have been early Buddhist is quite obvious, and the other caves on this face of the hill were probably of the same period and origin being simple vihāras.

Though not of Buddhist origin and therefore not coming into this category, a short description of the great Brāhmanical cave will be given as it is visited by so many people coming to Bombay. It is laid out on an almost similar plan to the Duma Lena or Sītā's bath at Ellora, though it is neither in such good preservation nor originally of such excellent carving and exactness as the Ellora cave. It has three entrances. Ascending a few steps the visitor arrives in a large hall, the roof of which is supported on massive pillars with cushion type capitals. On each side are small courtyards at the back of which are small shrines, that to the south contains an excellent cistern of good water while that to the north is guarded by mediæval animals such as also are found at the main entrance to the Duma Lena of Ellora and also in the Brāhmanical temples at Khajuraho. The most striking of all the things in this cave is the Trimurthi carved in the back wall of the main hall. This wonderful group of the divine trio represents the Brāhmanical Trinity revealing the unity of gods. The centre head is that of Brāhma the constructor, the second head on the right holding a lotus is Vishnu the preserver, and third is the profile of Siva the destroyer in the form of Rudra. From the various carvings and symbols used the whole temple was obviously dedicated to Siva and in a special shrine to the north-west of the main hall is the Lingam. To the left of the Trimurthi on the back wall is a gigantic Ardhanārī round which many figures are grouped. This is not unnaturally mistaken by European visitors ignorant of

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Hindu mythology for an amazon and the fault is repeated in many guide books. In the compartment to the right of the Trimurthi the two principal figures are Siva and on his left hand Pārvatī. Other carvings in the temple depict various scenes of Brāhmanical mythology chiefly connected with Vishnu and Siva.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE CAVES OF BAGH.

In the south of Malwa about 25 miles south-west of Dhār is the village of Bāgh, 3 miles to the south of which is situated a group of vihāras now much ruined, owing to the rock in which they are cut being stratified and having given way in many places. The cliff side in which they are excavated rises some 150 feet above the Bāgh River and is remarkable as being the only outcrop of standstone in an otherwise basaltic region. The caves, which are nine in number, extend over a frontage of about 750 yards. It is possible to motor to within two or three hundred yards of the caves, but there is no railway station nearer than Mhow, some seventy miles to the east. A considerable amount of work is now being done by the Archæological Department of Gwalior State, in whose territory the caves are situated, in the way of repairs and renovations. It is much to be regretted that until fairly recently Yogis and others had taken possession of some of these caves doing considerable damage to the paintings in covering them with smoke from their fires and adding to the damage already done by bats. There are no inscriptions in the caves from which it is possible to lay down any definite date as to the excavation, but from the sculptures and architecture they are obviously of a transitional period and may probably be placed about A.D. 450 to 500, the painting being 100 years or so later. The actual Dāgoba which is found in a few of the caves

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has no image of Buddha carved upon it, as is done in much later caves at Ajanta and Ellora and this memorial dome apparently was the centre of worship, but already images of Buddha appear in these caves from which we may assume that they are later than the Hināyāna sect. The pillars and other architecture is not of such an early type as at Nāsik and it may be assumed that such sculptures as there are have been done at the same time as the excavation and not as in some other cases at a considerably later date. The paintings, which are, as has already been stated, considerably damaged, have been recently very well copied by the Gwalior State Archæological Department, and an excellent book illustrating many of these has recently been published by the India Society which also gives full details and plans of the caves at Bāgh. However, in spite of this, a short description will be given here of the different caves.

Cave No. II, which is popularly known as the "Pandavonki Gumpha" besides being one of the most elaborate, is also the best preserved of the whole group. It is a square vihāra with cells on three sides and a stūpa inside a shrine in the back, the total measurement from front to back being rather more than 150 feet. The ante-chamber has two 12-sided pillars in front. The walls of this room are adorned with sculpture. On each end is a standing image of Buddha between two attendants.

Cave No. III, locally known as the "Hāthikhāna" is also a vihāra, but the cells are of a more elaborate design than those in cave No. II. Much of the forefront has fallen, but it is evident that there must have been a row of chambers on the south-west side corresponding with those on the north-east, and the cave originally consisted probably of two distinct halls, an outer one supported on eight octagonal columns and

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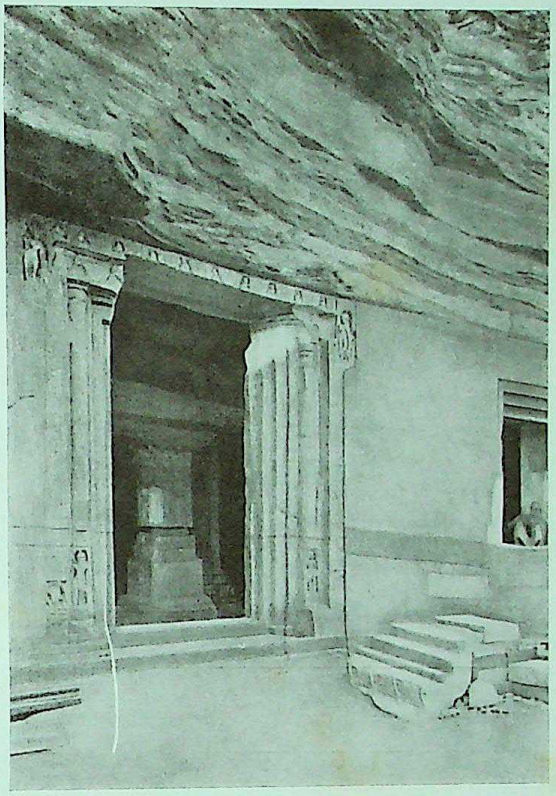
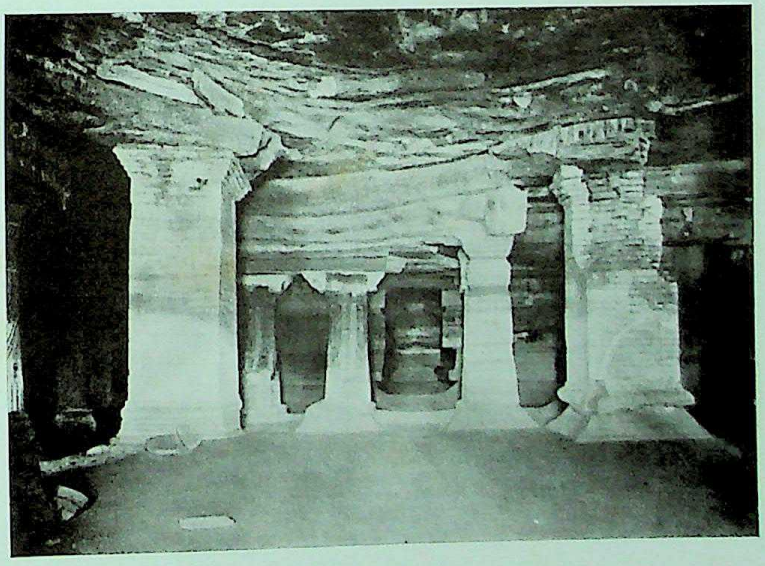


DOORWAY OF CAVE IV.



CAVE IV, INTERIOR.

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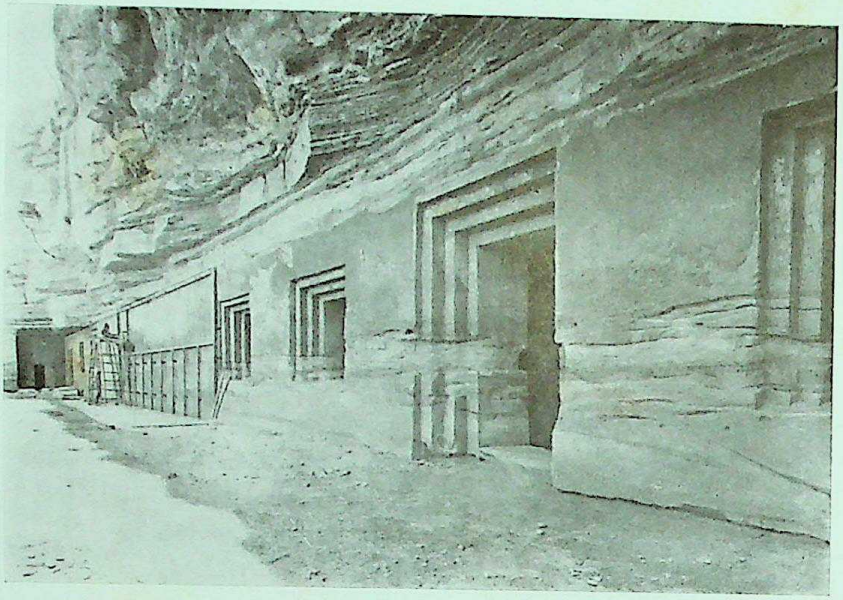
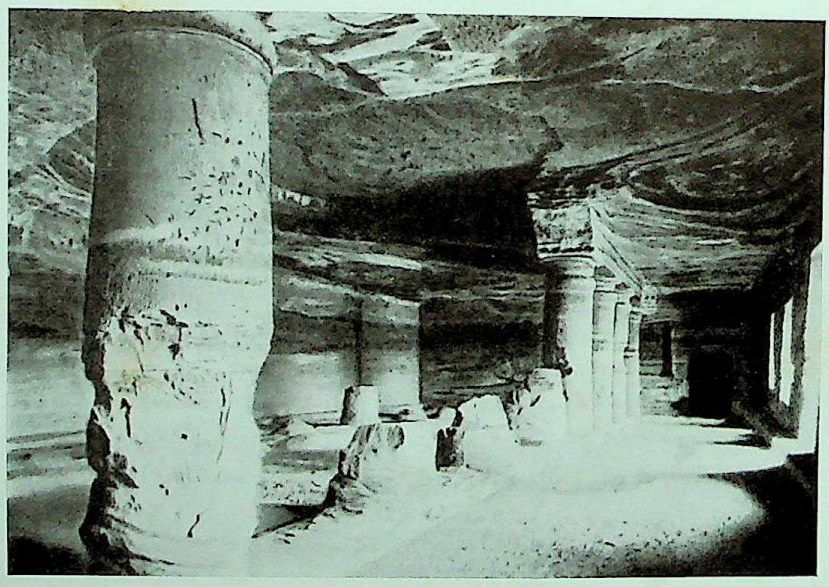
PLATE XLIII.

BAGH.



CAVES IV AND V.



CAVE V, INTERIOR.

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the inner one similarly supported, but without connecting cells such as there would have been in the outer court.

Cave No. IV, known as the "Rang Mahāl" from the paintings which still adorn its walls, was the finest of the group. It is separated from cave No. III by some 250 feet of rough cliff, but it is contiguous with cave No. V, and in front of these caves there once stretched a portico more than 220 feet in length and borne on 22 pillars. The pillars and much of the overhanging roof of this portico have now fallen but the pilasters at either ends are intact, and on the back wall and roof are many traces of the paintings which formerly covered them. It is very similar in general plan to cave No. II, but is more spacious and elaborate. The shrine at the back containing the Dāgoba is unadorned with sculpture, but the pillars in the hall are more pretentious and the decoration of its various parts, cells, doorways and windows, and painting on the portico are much more ambitious.

Cave No. V is a rectangular excavation, 95 feet by 44 feet, the roof being supported by two rows of columns, their round shafts and cushion capitals being unrelieved by fluting or other devices. Each row stands on a common plinth, which like the architecture above extends from side to side of the hall. It was probably used as a refectory or general meeting place and is not a vihāra in the general sense of the term. Connected by a small passage to this cave is cave No. VI.

Cave No. VI. Very recently apparently a great deal of the roof has fallen in and it is difficult to make out much of this cave, but it appears to have been a small vihāra with a few cells opening out of it.

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Cave No. VII appears to have been very similar to cave No. II, but this and caves Nos. VIII and IX have almost entirely collapsed and their interiors are choked with masses of rock and debris, which make an examination of them almost impossible. It is doubtful whether it will ever be worth removing the debris as so much of the original shape of the cave will have been altered.

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CHAPTER XVII.

THE BUDDHIST CAVES OF ELLORA.

ONE of the most important series of caves in India is that situated at Ellora in the north-west of the Nizam's territory, some 16 miles from Aurangābād. They are excavated in the scarp of a plateau, the scarp running nearly north and south for about a mile and a quarter and at each end throwing out a horn towards the west.

It is difficult to say which of the series of caves at Ellora was really the first to be started. It is probable that the few Bhikshu-grihas in the nullah above the big waterfall near cave No. XXIX, known as the Duma Lena, were the first excavations to be made, being nearest the best source of water. Undoubtedly the series of larger caves in the south horn, known as the Dhedwāda Group, and of Buddhist origin were the first complete series to be made. The origin of the word "Dhedwāda" is not clear by any means; it may be said that it was applied out of contempt for the Buddhists by the modern Hindus, or as a corruption of Thedwāda or quarters of the Theros or Bauddha priests, or from their having in later times been occupied by Dheds. It is even possible that at the time of the building of the Kailāsa and the more elaborate Brāhmanical temples, on which the Chalukyan kings spent so much money, these quarters were occupied by the workmen employed, which may even have given the name

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to the Chaitya cave, known as the Vishvakarma or carpenters' cave, used by the guild of masons for their place of worship. In this way legendary names would be accounted for.

The caves at Ellora, besides those of Bauddha origin, were excavated by Brāhmans and Jains, both of which faiths have left magnificent monuments. Cave No. XVI, known as the Kailāsa, is probably the finest and grandest monolithic excavation in the world. No written description can adequately portray the stupendous work entailed in this temple. The Duma Lena cave No. XXIX which is similar in pattern, but perhaps better executed than the main cave at Elephanta, is also a wonderful piece of work. The Indra-sabha, cave No. XXXII, may be said to be the glory of the Jains. However, as this book only deals with Buddhist caves, it is not proposed to give a lengthy description of those of other origins, and other books must be consulted by any one desirous of knowing more of the wonderful Kailāsa, Duma Lena and Jaina caves.

The caves of Bauddha origin consist of a series of 12 caves ranging from A.D. 350 to A.D. 700. There are very distinct signs of the later Mahāyāna sect as exemplified especially in cave No. X, the Vishvakarma, where we find the image of the Buddha carved in front of the Dāgoba. Beginning at the south end of the series of caves the first cave is a vihāra or a monastery with eight cells measuring roughly 52 feet each way; it is not of very great interest excepting perhaps as being one of the oldest caves here. Most of the front has fallen away. Cave No. II is a large and interesting cave; it must at some time have been some sort of chapel or hall for worship, but it is not a Chaitya cave in the ordinary sense. It is approached by a flight of steps leading to

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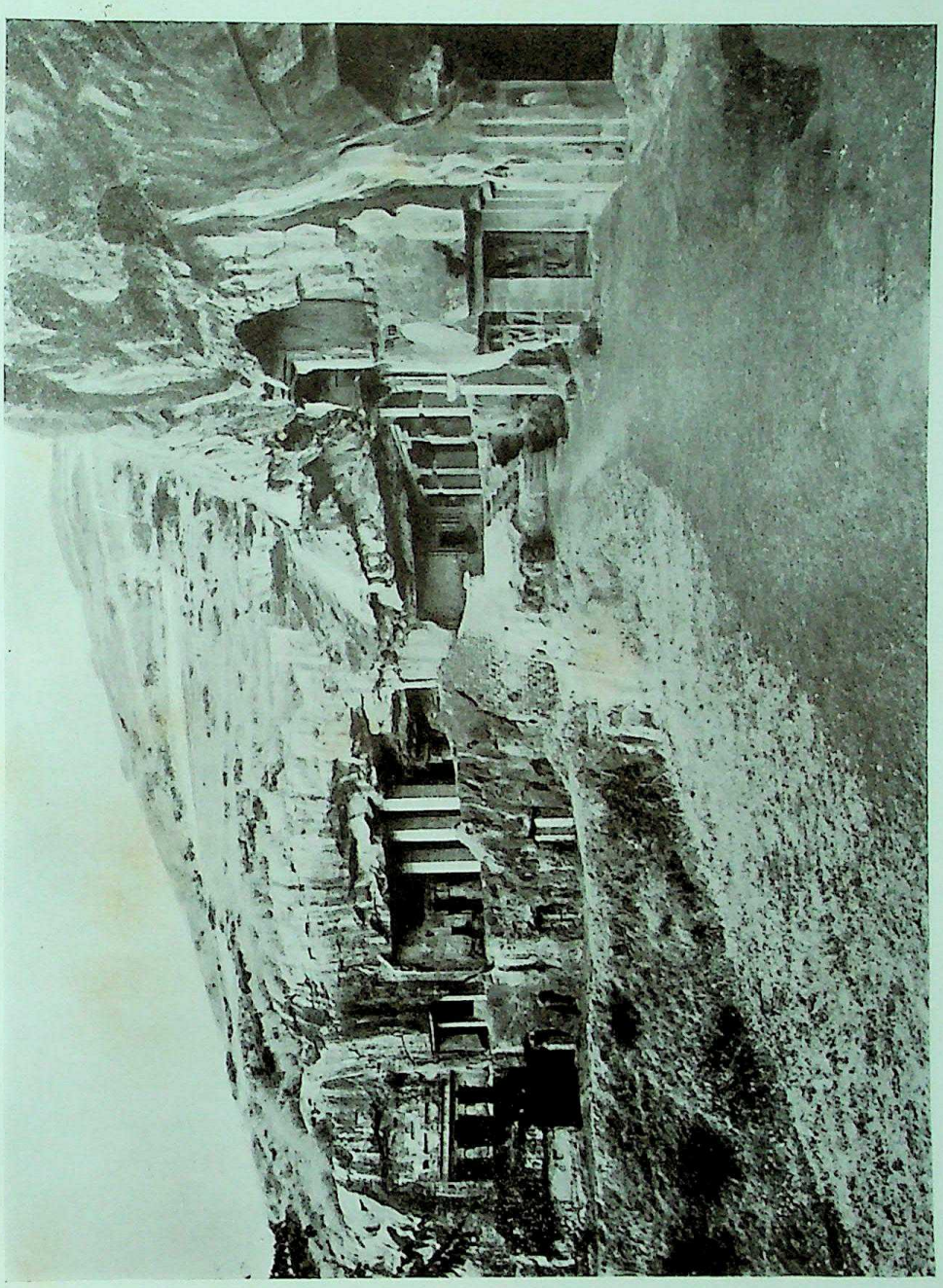
ELLORA.



DHEDWADA CAVES.

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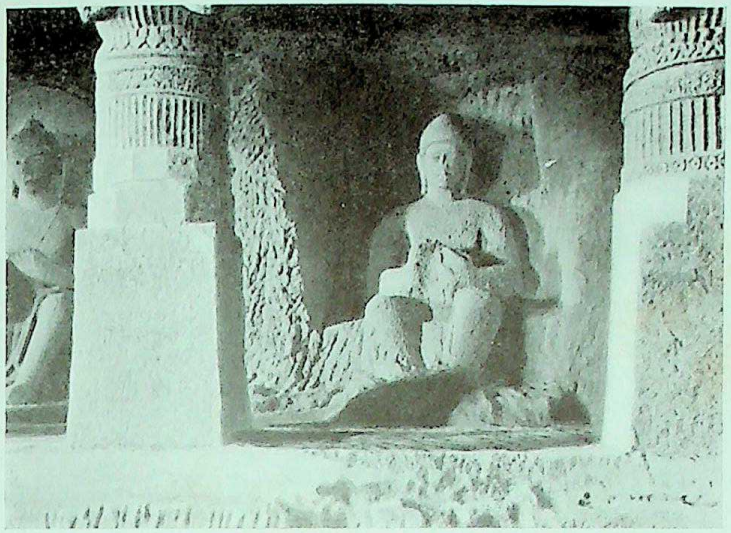
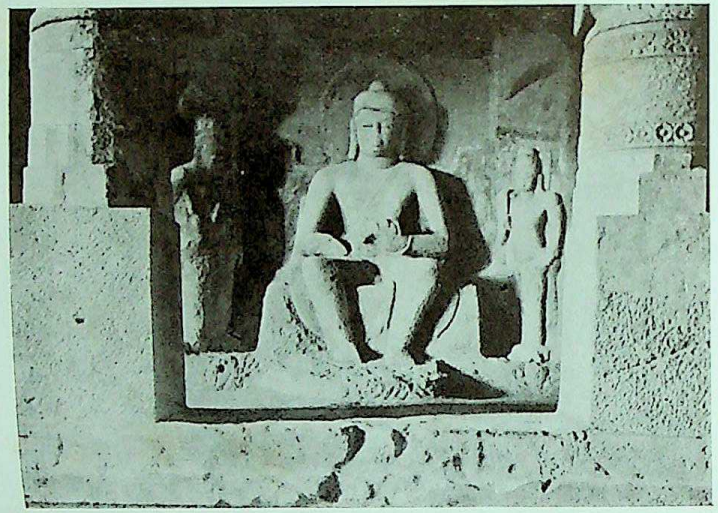
ELLORA.

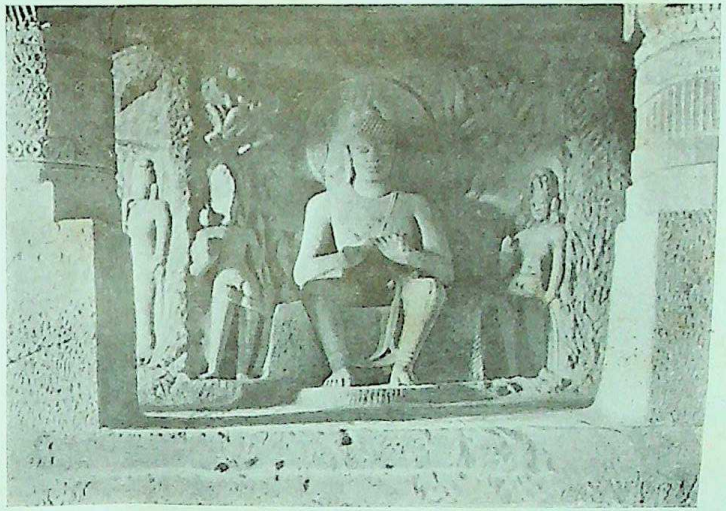
I.



II.



III.



IV.

"The Birth of a Buddha," Cave II.

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a verandah, the front of which has been carved in compartments with fat ganas or dwarf figures, often in grotesque attitudes. The cave contains lateral galleries filled with images of the Buddha seated on a lotus throne in the attitude of teaching. A very interesting feature in this cave is what may be termed the "Birth of a Buddha." In the north-east corner is a figure of the Buddha very roughly blocked out, the face alone being more or less finished; to the left of this is another figure also in embryo, but considerably more progress has been made than in the first mentioned sculpture; next to this we have the completed Buddha. The roof is supported by twelve massive columns arranged in a square, the capitals, which may be termed the cushion capital, being similar to those at Elephanta and in all the later Bauddha caves. The shrine contains a colossal Buddha seated on a *sinhasāna*. It should be noted that in nearly all the caves where the Buddha is represented in the attitude of teaching or in the "Dharma-Chakra Mudra," in the excavations at Ellora, he is represented in the sitting position with his feet on the ground and not folded as in the "Dhyāna Mudra," which is the attitude in which he is generally represented at Ajanta. The Chaitya-window and "rail pattern" ornamentation found in the earlier caves has here almost entirely disappeared. And in place of this we find walls covered profusely with images of Buddha and other Bauddha sages which, with the coming of the Mahāyāna sect and the gradual corruption of the teachings, were becoming images of worship. It is difficult to place an exact date for this cave, but it was probably not begun before the fourth century and may not have been completed till two and a half centuries later.

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the north side of the door of the shrine is a gigantic dwarpāla in the form of a female dressed exactly in the garb of Padmapāni. On the south end a similar female figure has been carved with a peacock at her left hand; below it a pandit is reading. This is supposed to represent Sarasvatī, the Goddess of Learning. In the shrine is a large image of Buddha seated with the usual attendants.

From this cave is a staircase leading to the cave below by which we descend to cave No. VII. It is a large plain vihāra 51 feet wide by 43 feet deep with only 4 square columns supporting the roof. It is in no way interesting and does not appear to have been completed.

Cave No. VIII is entered by a roughly-cut passage or perhaps unfinished cell from cave No. VII. It consists of two rooms with a shrine. The outer room is 28 feet by 17 feet with a slightly raised platform filling the west end of it. On the north side is a small chapel on a raised floor with two slender columns in front, on the back wall of which is seated Buddha with attendants dressed nearly alike with Brāhmanical cords, necklaces and armlets but no chauris, the one on Buddha's left holding in his hand a three-pronged object, probably the Vajra or thunderbolt, from whence his name Vajrapāni is derived. The inner hall is 28 feet by 25 feet with three cells on the north side. The shrine has the usual dwarpālas and their attendants at the door. Buddha is seated with his attendants, but in this case, Padmapāni has four arms holding the chauri and the lotus in his left hands and over his shoulder hangs a deer-skin. At his feet are small figures of devotees and behind them is a tall female figure with a flower in her left hand. Coming out of this by the large

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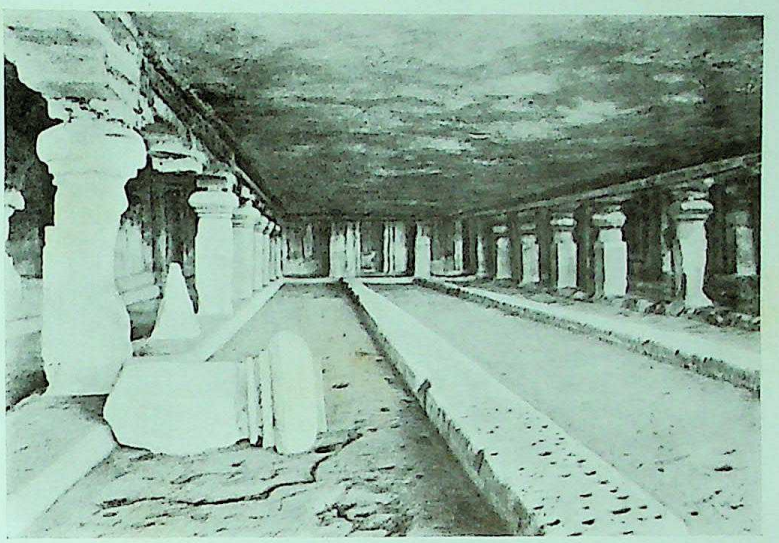
ELLORA.



THE MAHARWADA VIHARA, CAVE V.

THE TIN THAL, CAVE XII.

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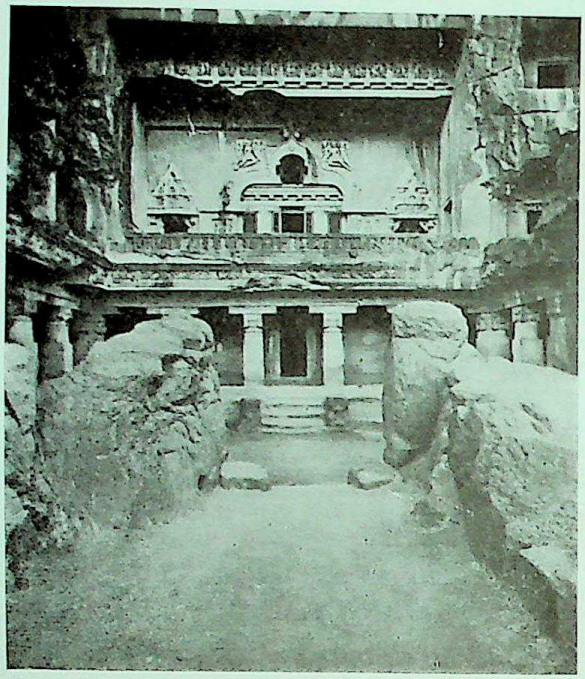
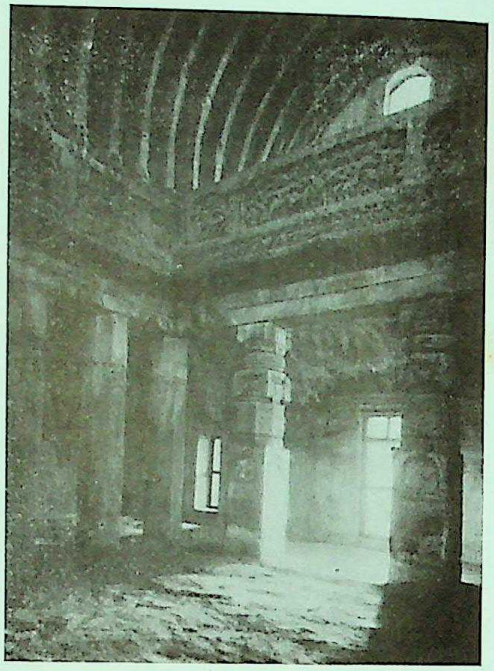
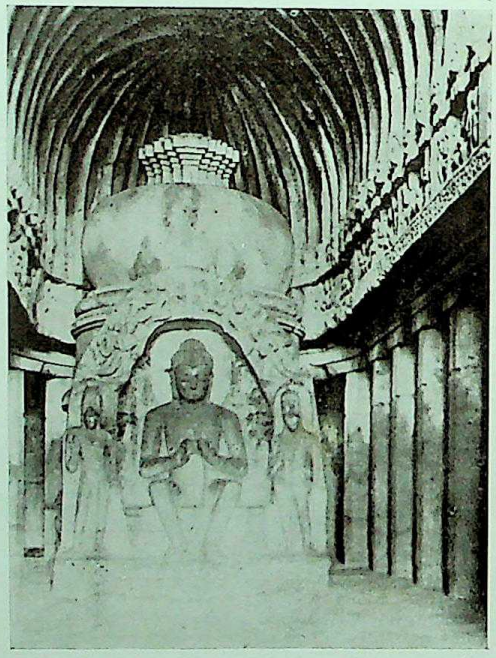
ELLORA.



EXTERIOR.



INTERIOR.



THE DAGOBA IN
THE VISHVAKARMA, CAVE X,

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opening on the south side, just under cave No. IX, is a sculptured group of a fat male and female, the latter with a child on her knees and an attendant. A similar group occurs also at Ajanta and Aurangābād, but what they are actually meant to represent it is not easy to say, possibly the patron of the Buddha when the cave was excavated, or the prince who excavated it with his queen.

Cave No. IX which must be entered through cave No. VI consists of a small outer balcony and an inner covered portico, the pillars in this again being of the Elephanta style with cushion capitals. Again we find the image of the Buddha with various attendants. As seen from the south, the cave has a well carved façade.

A short distance further to the north we come to cave No. X, one of the most beautiful small Chaityas to be found anywhere. It has a large open court in front which may sometimes have been filled with water to purify the worshippers entering the cave. It is not so severe nor so grandly proportioned as the great Chaitya cave at Karli, but the proportions and the carvings are of very pleasing design. The façade is highly ornamental and consists of a verandah surmounted by a gallery leading to the inner or minstrel gallery within the chapel. We do not find here the great horse-shoe window common in all the early Chaityas, but in this case the window has been broken up by pillars with a small opening over them. The arched roof is carved in imitation of wood-work and the projection of imitation wooden beams is also to be seen on the façade. The deep frieze above the pillars is divided into two belts, the lower and narrower carved with crowds of fat little gambolling

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figures, ganas, in all attitudes. The upper is much deeper, and is divided over each pillar so as to form compartments, each containing usually Buddha with two attendants and two Bodhisattwas. The inner side of the gallery is also divided into three compartments filled with figures. Above the frieze are little Nāga busts from which rise the ribs of the ceiling. A gigantic figure of the Buddha is carved in front of the Dāgoba which is surmounted by a capital but no umbrella. It is much frequented by carpenters who come to worship the image of Buddha as Vishvakarma, the patron of their craft from whence the present name of the Chaitya has been derived. It is, in fact, affirmed by the local devotees that the Brāhmanical cord which hangs from the thumb of the image is not a cord at all, but a stream of blood flowing from a wound inflicted during the course of the daily work as a carpenter, and for this reason it is painted red.

A little further to the north is cave No. XI which was for many years supposed to consist only of two storeys, hence the name of Do Thal, but in 1876, the excavation of the earth from what was then the lower floor revealed the landing of a stair from a cave below.

This cave and the next, the Tin Thal, cave No. XIII are very similar in outer appearance. The Tin Thal, however, is internally excavated to a greater depth than the Do Thal. They consist of an open court, entered through a comparatively narrow passage in the rock and each are of three storeys high. Externally they are simple in design, the pillars being quite square and regular with no ornamented capitals and little in the way of sculpture. The excavation of these must, however, have required considerable ingenuity as each storey is of considerable size and designed with great

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accuracy. They each contain images of the Buddha with his usual attendants, the carvings being of a late period and would have probably been excavated about the seventh century. They are the only examples of three-storeyed vihāras known to have been made and are interesting from this point of view only. Each storey is approached by a well-made staircase from the storey below. They contain cells in the walls and may have been used as dormitories or hostels. They show very marked signs of the Mahāyāna sect, No. XII probably being one of the latest to be excavated.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CAVES OF AJANTA.

THE town of Ajanta is situated 60 miles north-west of Aurangābād in His Exalted Highness the Nizam's Dominions, and about 35 miles south of Bhusaval, on the G. I. P. Railway. In former times it lay on one of the main routes from the north to the kingdoms of the south and was known as the "Gate of the Deccan." The caves to which it has given its name lie four miles to the west-north-west of this town. They are approached from Phardapur, a small town at the foot of the Ghāt, and about three and a half miles north-east from them. There is a fairly good motor road from Aurangābād on the N. G. S. Railway to Ajanta and Phardapur where there is a guest house of H. E. H. the Nizam, permission to occupy which can be obtained from the Archæological Department of the Hyderabad Government, and there is also a Travellers' Bungalow open to all. From Phardapur to Jalgaon on the G. I. P. main line 30 miles north there is a motor road, which also passes through Pahur 10 miles north where there is a station on the narrow gauge branch from Pachora.

The caves are excavated in the face of an almost perpendicular scarp of rock, about 250 feet high, sweeping round in a curve of fully a semi-circle, and forming the north or outer side of a wild secluded ravine, down which comes a small stream. Above the caves the valley terminates abruptly in a waterfall of

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seven leaps, known as the "Sāt Kund," the lower of which may be from 70 to 80 feet high, and the others 100 feet or more altogether. The caves extend about 600 yards from east to west round the concave wall of amygdaloid trap that hems in the stream on its north or left side, and vary in elevation, from about 35 to 100 feet above the bed of the torrent, the lowest being about a third of the arc from the east end.

The whole of the caves have been numbered like houses in a street, commencing from the east or outer end, and terminating at the inner extremity by the caves furthest up the ravine. The enumeration, it will be understood, is without reference to either the age or purpose of the caves, but wholly for convenience of description. The oldest are the lowest down the rock, and practically at the centre, being Nos. VIII to XIII, from which group they radiate right and left, to No. I on the one hand, XXIX on the other.

The series of caves at Ajanta is probably in some respects the most interesting and finest of all those to be found in India. They belong exclusively to the Buddhist religion and extend through the whole period during which Buddhism prevailed as a dominant religion in the country. Two of them a vihāra and a Chaitya, Nos. VIII and IX, certainly belong to the second century B.C., the sloping pillars of the Chaitya resembling those at Bhāja show the early age at which the cave was excavated. Two others, No. XXVI a Chaitya at one end of the series and No. I a vihāra at the other end, were probably not finished in the middle of the seventh century when Buddhism was tottering to its fall. Between these two periods, the twenty-nine caves found here are spread tolerably evenly over a period of more than eight centuries with only a break which occurs, not

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only here, but everywhere, between the Hināyāna and Mahāyāna forms of faith. It may be generally considered that Ajanta was a university for the teaching of the Buddhist faith. There is no other series in which the vihāras in any way compare with these either in size or magnificence. The later Chaityas, No. XIX and XXVI, surpass in beauty almost all others to be found, except possibly that at Karli which is certainly bigger and grander, and the Visvakarma at Ellora. The huge images of the Buddha found in the inner cells of the vihāras are almost invariably in the teaching attitude or "Dharma-Chakra Mudra" and unlike those at Ellora where he is sitting on a throne with his legs down. He is here depicted sitting with his legs folded as in the "Dhyāna Mudra" or attitude of meditation. The most noticeable features at Ajanta are the frescoes and paintings which still remain to this day, though unfortunately in few cases perfect. It must not be supposed that Ajanta was the only place at which originally paintings had decorated the walls and ceilings. Many caves at Ellora show signs of paintings, and as mentioned earlier there are distinct signs that the walls of the great Chaitya at Karli were also covered with paintings. Roofs of Chaityas at Junnar were also treated in this manner, but for some reason those at Ajanta are in a far better state of preservation than any others known. The Rang Mahāl at Bāgh and other caves of that series also contained what must at one time have been magnificent frescoes, but there again, though not so much damaged as others, the paintings have suffered considerably. The Archæological Department of His Highness' Government, being fully alive to the value of this magnificent national gallery, have spared no pains or expense in doing everything that is possible to preserve for future generations such as is left at the present day.

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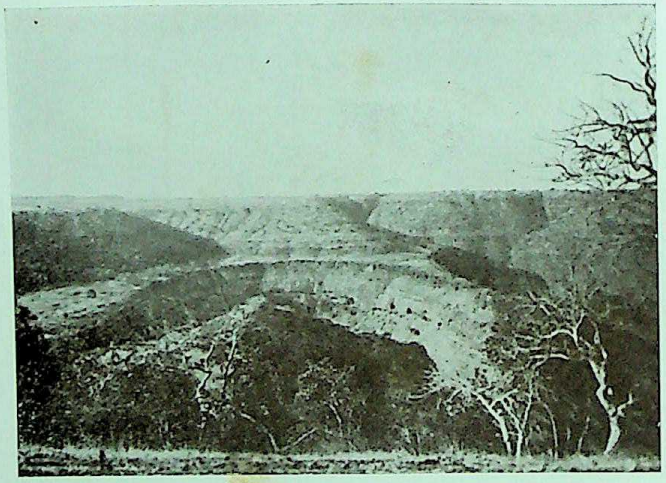
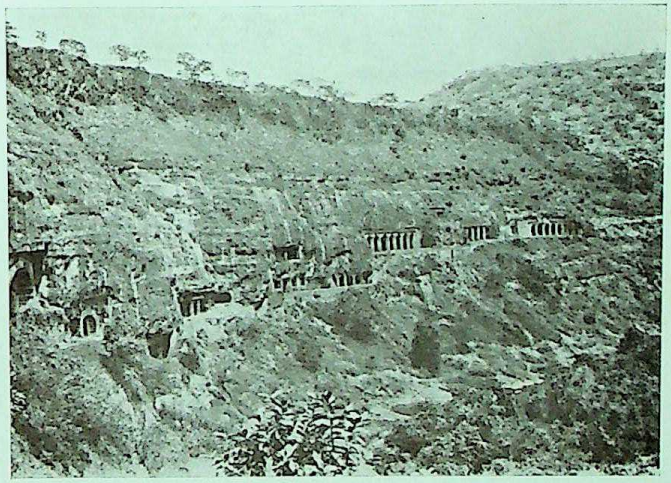
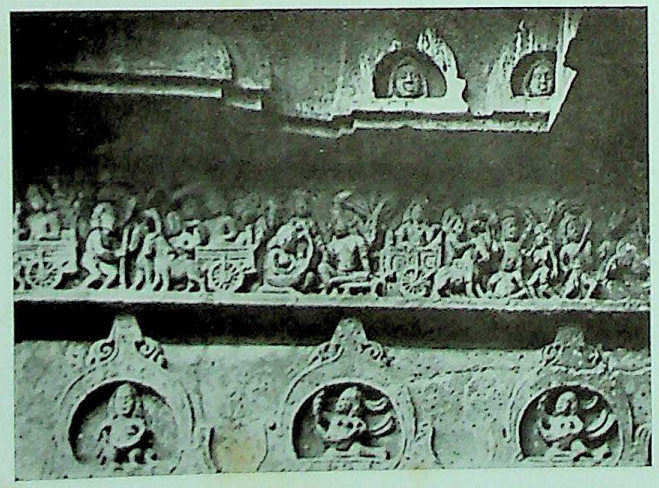
AJANTA.



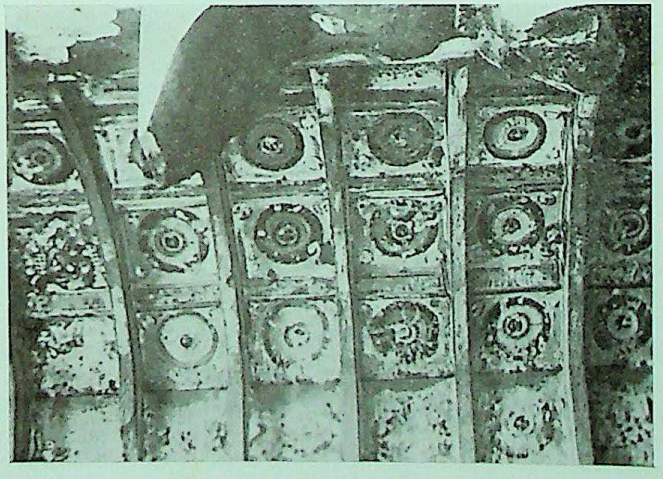
THE GORGE.



CAVES I TO XII.



SCULPTURES IN CAVE I.



PAINTED CEILING IN CAVE I.

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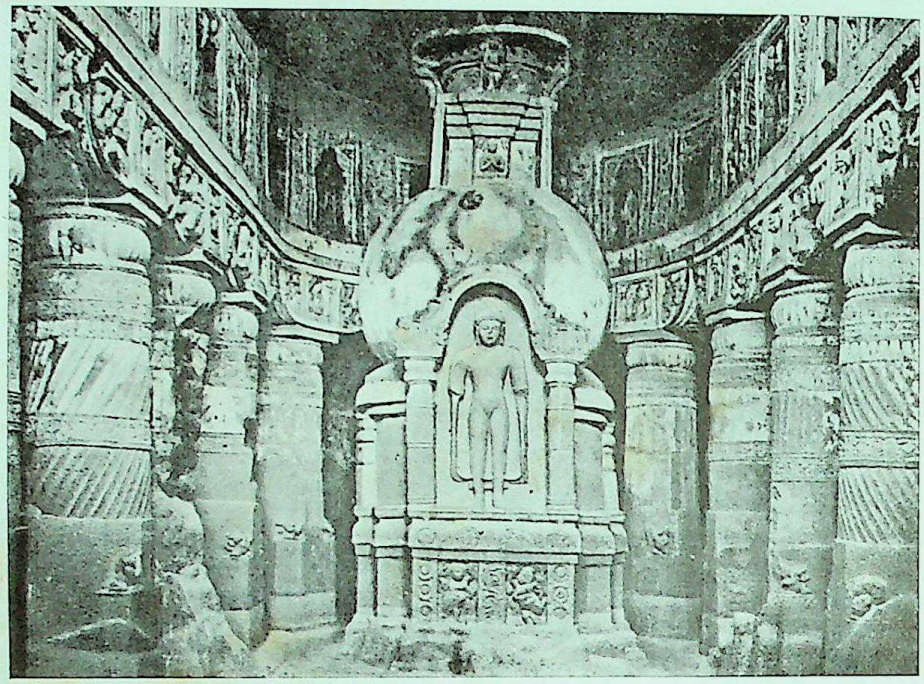
AJANTA.



INTERIOR CAVE XIX.

THE DAGOBA.

SCULPTURES.

CAVE XXVI.

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It is an interesting fact that the materials for colouring, except in the case of blue, can be found in the soil of the hills not far from the site; this was probably ground up and mixed with some kind of gum. Some sixty years ago, about the year 1870, an attempt was made to preserve the frescoes and Mr. Griffiths was employed for the purpose. It was intended to varnish the walls, and in such places where only varnish has been applied, no damage was done and the paintings were considerably brightened, but unfortunately much of the work was done without close supervision and linseed oil was used in place of good varnish. There is now no difficulty in removing the varnish, but so far the efforts of all experts have failed to find a remedy for the linseed oil. The preservation work which is now being carried on consists of cementing round the edges of broken portions in order to stop any further breaking away of the plaster, to fill in the spaces as far as possible with neutral tint, but in no case ever to actually fill in colour or retouch the old work. Below is given Fergusson's description of the paintings taken from "Cave Temples of India."

PAINTINGS.*

Another characteristic of these caves is that they still possess their paintings in a state of tolerable completeness. From the fragments that remain there is very little doubt that all the Buddhist caves were originally adorned with paintings, but in nine cases out of ten these have perished, either from the effects of the atmosphere, which in that climate is most destructive, or from wanton damage done by ignorant men. A hundred years ago those at Ajanta were very tolerably complete,

* Cave Temples of India, pp. 284-88.

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and their colours exhibited a freshness which was wonderful, considering their exposure to vicissitudes of an Indian climate for from fifteen to eighteen centuries. Since that time, however, bees, bats and barbarians have done a great deal to obliterate what was then so nearly perfect. Enough, however, still remains or has been copied, and so saved to show what was originally intended and how it was carried into effect. As no such series of pictures exists now in any other series of caves, its being found here adds immensely to the interest of this group. Besides this it affords an opportunity, not only of judging of the degree of excellence to which India reached in this branch of the fine arts, but presents a more vivid picture of the feelings and aspirations of the Buddhists during their period of greatest extension in India than we can obtain from any other source.

In Western India the older caves seem as a rule to have been decorated with painting, while sculpture was as generally employed in the East. To receive these paintings the walls were left somewhat rough on the surface, and were then covered with a thin coating of plaster composed of fine dust, in some instances at least, of pounded brick, mixed with fibres and the husks of rice. This was smoothed and covered with a coating of some ground colour, on which the design was drawn and then painted. The pillars being smoothed with the chisel seem to have received only a heavy ground coating to prepare them to receive the scenes of figures to be drawn on them.

In about half the Ajanta caves there are no remains of painting, and in those that are unfinished there perhaps never was any; but in about thirteen of them fragments of greater or less extent still exist, and most of these were no doubt originally covered with paintings. It is only, however, in about seven caves that the fragments left are large or of

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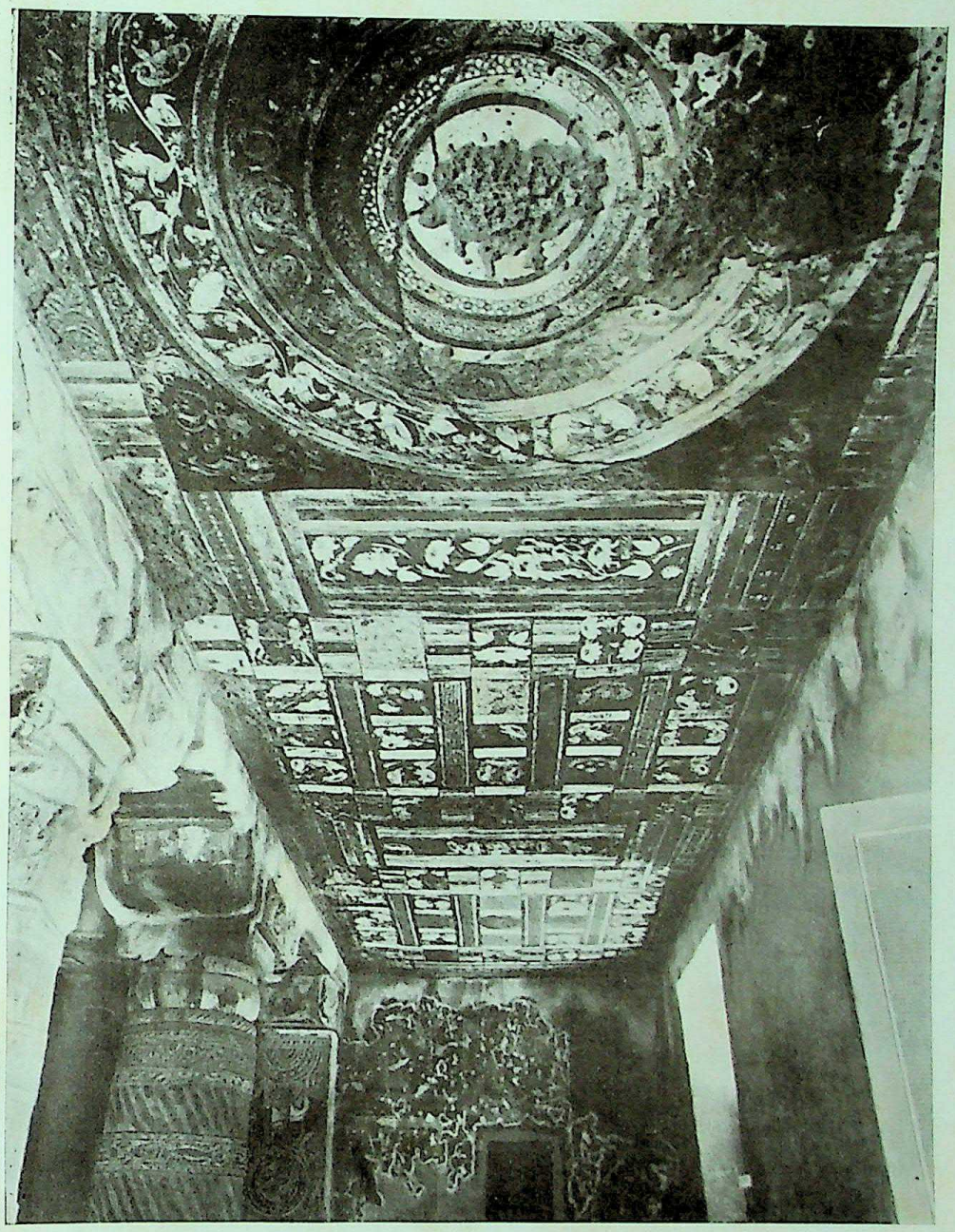

THE PAINTED CEILING, CAVE II.

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special interest; these are caves Nos. I, II, IX, X, XVI and XVII.

Of the date of these paintings it is difficult to form a very definite estimate, nor are they all of the same age. Over the door on the inside of the front wall of cave No. IX is a fine fragment which probably belongs to an earlier date than the major part of the paintings in caves Nos. I, II, etc., while again on the front wall of cave No. I are two large fragments that seem probably to be of a later date than the others. There are, moreover, in cave No. IX some portions of one layer of painting over another, of which the lower must be the older, probably a good deal older than the upper or indeed than most of the paintings in the other caves. We shall probably not be far wrong if we attribute the generality of the paintings in caves Nos. I, II, XVI, XVII, etc., to the sixth century, which we may gather from the style of alphabetical character used in a few painted inscriptions and names of figures is the date of these paintings. The later pictures may then be attributed to the seventh, and the earlier ones, in caves Nos. IX and X, may possibly date even as far back as the second—in the time of the Andhrabhritya kings, the great patrons of Buddhism in the first three centuries of our era.

The scenes represented are generally from the legendary history of Buddha and the "Jātakas," the visit of Asita to the infant Buddha, the temptation of Buddha by Mara and his forces, Buddhist miracles, the Jātaka of King Sibi, Indra and Sachi, court scenes, legends of the Nāgas, hunting scenes, battle pieces, etc. Few of these pictures have ever yet been identified, because no visitor has had the time to spare on the

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spot and the books at hand to refer to, in order to determine which story each represents. The scenes depicted, too, separately cover a much larger space, and are more complicated, than would at first appear to be the case. They are divided, too, into separate acts or sections in a way that is sometimes perplexing. The copies hitherto made are often only parts of a whole story, while large portions have been destroyed, and this must be borne in mind by those who use them in attempting to read their contents.

Certain parts of the pictures are always represented conventionally and it is necessary to note this before further examination. For example, whenever the scene of any picture is intended to be among the Himālayas or other mountains, this is indicated by the background being chequered by what might seem to represent brick, usually with one or two sides of a dark or bluish green and the other light; these are the rocks, presented with a conventionalism worthy of Chinese artists. To interpret the meaning, however, there are frequently represented on these blocks, figures of birds and monkeys, and sometimes of Bhīl or other wild tribes of bowmen and the fabled inhabitants of the hills—Kiratas, Guhuakas, and Kinnaras—the latter are the musicians to the mountain gods with human busts and the legs and tails of birds. Torrents and trees are also occasionally depicted.

It may be remarked that this mode of representing mountain scenery is employed also in the sculptures, especially in the favourite one in Brāhmanical caves where Rāvana is represented under Mount Kailāsa trying to carry it off.

Rivers and the sea are equally fantastically drawn, and sometimes with rocky shores. But the fishes, sankhas, etc.,

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in them, and a boat, generally interpret the representation at once.

Doors and gateways are represented always in one form, as an entrance between two jambs surmounted by a semi-circular coping terminating the Chaitya window ornament at either end: usually a dwarpāla, darwan, or chaukidar is represented standing in or near it, but in many cases some other figure is passing in or out and connecting the scene inside with that in the court, street, or campaign.

The palaces or buildings are represented by a flat roof over the heads of the figures, supported by slender pillars, often with blue capitals, and commonly dividing the area within into a central hall and two side aisles or verandahs.

The dresses are very various but pretty clearly distinctive of the classes represented. The great ones, Devas, Rājas, Diwāns, and Nobles wear little clothing, at least above the waist, but much jewellery, armlets, necklaces, fillets, and high crowns or mukutas. Men of lower rank are often more covered, but have little or no jewellery. Bhikshus and monks usually are clothed by their "sela" or robe, which leaves only the right shoulder bare. Rānis and ladies of distinction, and perhaps their more personal servants, wear much jewellery on their persons but of different sorts according to their rank. The Rānis are frequently, if not always, represented almost as if they were nude; very close examination, however, shows that that is not intended, but that they are dressed in

"a wondrous work of thin transparent lawn"

. . . so thin, indeed that the painter has failed to depict it, and has usually contented himself by slightly indicating it in a few very light touches of whitish colour across the thighs,

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and by tracing its flowered border, and painting the chain by which it was held up round the waist.

Dancing women are represented much as they would be now in abundance of flowing coloured clothing. Dāsis and Kanchukinis, household slaves or servants, wear bodices or cholis and a sari round the loins, usually of striped cloth.

Thirty years ago there were some fine fragments of painting on the walls of cave No. X, the few portions of which now remaining have all been scribbled over by natives. These paintings are of a very early date, the figures, differing in costume from those in the other caves; the dresses of the human figures belong to the age of Satarkarnis, and can hardly be attributed to a later date than the latter half of the second century A.D. They were mostly in outline, but the drawing was strikingly bold and true: on the left wall was a procession of men, some on foot and others on horse-back, variously dressed and armed, some with halberts, and with them groups of women, who appear to have formed part of a procession, one carrying what appears to be a relic casket, with an umbrella borne over it, or over a Rāja who stands before it. In another place is the Bidhidruma or sacred tree hung with offerings and people worshipping it, as is so frequently represented in the sculptures at Sānchi and elsewhere. There are also two drawings of a gateway, which at once remind us of those at the great tope of Sānchi in Bhopal, as well as of the marriage torāns still kept up in wood in Malwa. Elephants and people in procession covered a portion of the right wall and among the former was one with six tusks (chhadanta). To the right of them was a building with peacocks, etc., about it. Then a king and his Rāni, seated with attendants and approached by two figures,

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one of them carrying some objects hung from the ends of a pole. In the next scene the same two men were saluting or supplicating the Rāja and his consort: again apparently the Rāja stands addressing her seated in an attitude betokening sorrow: and still behind to the right were other figures.

The paintings between the ribs of the aisles of cave No. X are of a much later date, and in one case at least there is a more modern inscription painted over the older work on the walls. Near the front, on the left wall, however, is a painted inscription in much older characters, like those of the inscription of Vasisthiputra on the right side of the great arch.

In these, and in the other old portions, the dresses, jewellery, etc., all remind us most vividly of the style of the early sculptures at Sānchi, in the verandah and capitals of the Karli Chaitya cave, on the capitals at Bedsa, in the vihāra of Gautamiputra I at Nāsik, and in the oldest discovered sculptures at Muttra. A broad heavy neck-chain is usually prominent, with large oblong discs or jewels slipped over it: large ear-rings, sometimes oblong, and apparently resting on the shoulders: many heavy rings on the wrists and legs of the females, who also have the hair covered in front in a peculiar style, and have a circular yellow disc or " tilaka " on the forehead: a sort of high turban with a knob in front is worn by the males, and the upper classes of neither sex wear much clothing except jewellery above the waist. Soldiers are armed with halberts, spears and bows and arrows.

Between the ribs of the arched roof there are figures of Buddhas, rosettes, etc., but they are not of earlier date than the sixth or seventh century.

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CHAPTER XIX.

CONCLUSION.

THE foregoing description of the Buddhist caves of India does not pretend to be a complete record of every cave that exists, but it does give a more or less complete story of the growth of Buddhist cave architecture from the earliest times to the fall of Buddhism in India. We have seen the remarkable simplicity of the earliest caves governed by the puritanical Hināyāna sect and the change from this to the Greater Vehicle or Mahāyāna sect which embellished their monasteries and places of worship both with paintings and sculptures. The groups of caves which have not been described are more or less difficult of access and do not display any remarkable feature. It is possible that the very earliest, those for instance near Gāya were originally natural caves which were later enlarged for purposes of dwellings. Throughout the whole series the Buddhist excavators never attempted any original cave architecture but studiously copied and improved on original wooden buildings, the remains of which have long since disappeared through the ravages of decay. It is fortunate for us that these great designers carried out their work in such imperishable material, for by doing so they have given us a complete record covering nearly a thousand years. The reason for the fall of Buddhism in India has never been quite clear, it has been said that it was due to ruthless persecution in which the disciples of Buddha were

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either exiled, slain or made to change their faith. This view has received the support of distinguished European scholars, but in spite of this, it seems unlikely, and we are probably more correct in believing the reasons given by that great student of Buddhism, Professor Rhys Davids, whose opinion is endorsed by the late Professor Buhler that it was partly owing to the changes which took place in the faith itself and partly in changes that took place in the intellectual standard of the people, and in both respects the influence of the foreign tribes that invaded India from the north-west is scarcely to be exaggerated. Year by year fresh discoveries are being made and more and more archæological remains are being found which eventually may be able to throw more light on the reasons for this decline in the Buddhist faith. Buddhist Sanskrit texts are becoming more and more available from which the historians of the future may be able to build up the story of the rise and fall of this great faith in India; the story will probably be a remarkable one, but it is probably a long time before it will be complete.

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Glossary.

Ardhanārī.—Ardha-nārīsvara, the combination of Siva and Devi, half-male half-female deity.

Arhat.—A term applied to advanced Bhikshus or Monks, very reverend or deserving.

Arya.—Worthy of reverence, a term applied to the Buddhists.

Aryan.—The Aryan race, the early invaders of India who came from the north-west. They possessed horses, and gradually overran the greater part of India.

Asokan Edicts.—Edicts engraved on stones and pillars by Asoka, the great Mauryan king, in which he described rules of morality and how his subjects should live and be ruled.

Bhikshu.—A Buddhist mendicant; so called because he begs instruction for the mind and food for the body.

Bodhisattwa.—*Bodhi*—knowledge, *sattwa*—in embryo; one in whom true knowledge is undeveloped. Buddha is referred to as "the Bodhisattwa" in the stories of the Jātaka. According to the Mahāyāna School there are besides Gautama many other Bodhisattwas. Among the best known of whom are Avalokitesvara, Manjusri, Mārīohi, Samantabhadra, Vajrapāni and Maitreya, the last of whom is the coming and last Buddha of this age of the world.

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Buddha.—(Pāli—*Bodhi,* knowledge). One who has acquired knowledge or "Enlightenment."

Brāhmans.—The priestly caste.

Bodhi Tree.—The "pipal" under which while Gautama was in a state of meditation he attained to "Knowledge" or "Enlightenment." See also under "Buddha."

Bo Tree.—See "Bodhi tree."

Boaz.—The right hand pillar at the porch or entrance of King Solomon's temple.

Chaumuka.—Four faced, applied to the four faced Tīrthankaras of the Jains.

Chauri.—A fly whisk resembling a horse's tail.

Chaitya.—A model of a Stūpa used as an altar in the cathedral or church caves of the Buddhists; the term is also applied to the cave or temple containing a "Chaitya" and used for worship.

Chakra.—A wheel—an ancient Vedic symbol of the Sun, used by the Buddhists as the symbol of the "Law." See also Mudra.

Dāgoba.—Derived from Dhātugarba or Dhātugoba, synonymous with the word Chaitya.

Dharma.—Duty, Law. See also Mudra.

Dhyāna.—Abstract meditation. See also Mudra.

Dwarpālas.—Doorkeepers.

Enlightenment.—See under "Buddha."

Fo.—The Chinese name for Buddha.

Gana.—Is the name given to an attendant of Siva and Pārvatī. The Chief is Ganesa "Lord of Ganas" who is a son of Siva and Pārvatī. Ganas were punished for

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any breach of discipline by banishment from Kailāsa, usually to the world of mortals, where they had to serve their time till some event or other brought the curse to an end.

Gandharvas.—Servants or attendants of the gods having guard of the celestial "soma," a divine panacea. They also direct the Sun's horses and act as servants to Agni, god of Fire. In post-Vedic times they are the celestial singers and musicians at Indra's court, where they live in company with the Apsarases who were originally water-nymphs.

Garbha.—The hemispherical dome of a Stūpa or Dāgoba. A womb.

Garūda.—The eagle or vahān of Vishnu.

Griha.—A cell. Commonly used in the form "Bhikshu-griha," a mendicant's cell.

Hināyāna.—*Hin*—small, *yā*—to go. "One who goes by the small way." The lesser "vehicle," the early puritanical sect of the Buddhists who allowed no idolatry. Cf. "Mahāyāna."

Jāchin.—The left hand pillar at the porch or entrance of King Solomon's temple.

Jātaka.—The Jātaka stories were recited by Gautama after his "enlightenment," referring to his past lives as a "Bodhisattwa."

Lakshmī.—The dawn maiden, the goddess of fertility and good luck, represents the "Nativity" in Buddhistic symbols.

Lāt.—A pillar found outside a temple. See also Stāmbha.

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Mahāyāna.—*Mahā*—great, *yā*—to go. One who goes by the great way, the "greater" vehicle. The later and idolatrous sect of the Buddhists. Cf. Hināyāna.

Manjusri.—*Manju*—beautiful, Sri—*god*. The beautiful god. The name of a Bodhisattwa.

Mudra.—An attitude. Buddha is depicted in certain definite "attitudes" or "Mudras" the most usual of which are (1) the Dharmā-Chakra Mudra (turning the wheel of the law) where he is represented sitting on a "sinhasan" with his hands in front of his breast holding the little finger of the left hand between the thumb and forefinger of the right; (2) the Dhyāna Mudra (attitude of abstract meditation), where he sits with his legs laid one on the other over the feet with the palms turned upwards; (3) the Vajrāsāna or Bhumi-sparsa Mudra (earth-touching attitude), when the left hand is on the upturned soles of the feet, and the right resting over the knee, points to the earth. These attitudes are liable to slight variation. There are others also, as with the right hand raised, in Abhaya Mudra; and when resting on his right side with his head to the north in which attitude he is said to have lain at his death.

Muni.—A saint.

Nirvāna.—*Nir*—without, *vān*—desire. A state of mental bliss arising from the control of desire, a state of mind without craving or desire. The highest state to which according to the Buddhist teaching the mind can attain. The complete annihilation of self, and its re-absorption into the cosmic universe.

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Om.—Abbreviation of the initial letters of the Vedic triad, *viz.*, Agni, Indra and Mitra, A. I. M., Om. Originally used as an invocation to the three great gods of the Vedas, later used merely as introductory or auspicious expletion at the beginning of every prayer.

Padmapāni.—*Padma*—a lotus, *pāni*—hand. The lotus handed. One of the Bodhisattwas found in attendance on the Buddha.

Pipal.—"Ficus Religiosa." A common tree giving good shade, found in many villages in India. See also Bodhi tree.

Pondhi.—A cistern found in association with Buddhist vihāras and Bhikshu-grihas.

Pradakshina.—The circumambulation of a Buddhist Stūpa or Chaitya, part of the ceremony in Buddhist ritual. It must always be performed from left to right leaving the object on the right hand side.

Sangha.—The Buddhist Brotherhood.

Stāmbha.—A pillar erected in front of a temple, whether Saiva, Vaishnava, Jaina or Buddhist, and surmounted by the symbol of the religion to which it is dedicated. Stāmbhas or lāts were erected by Asoka on which he had engraved many of his edicts.

Sthaviras.—An Elder, usually Buddhistic.

Stūpa.—Meaning to "heap," to "erect." Applied to any pile or mound, as to a funeral pile, and hence is applied to a tumulus erected over any of the sacred relics of Buddha or his followers, or spots consecrated as scenes of his acts.

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Tīrthankara.—A Jaina Elder.

Theros.—An Elder, usually Buddhistic.

Trimurti.—The divine trio, or Brāhmanical "Trinity," consisting of Brāhma, the creator, Vishnu, the preserver, and Siva, the destroyer, represented by a three-headed figure.

Tripitaka.—(*Tri*—three, *Pitak*—basket), Lit., "Three baskets," The Buddhist Sacred Scriptures, so called because they are divided into three parts: (1) Vinai Suttas (dealing with discipline). (2) Sutta (sayings and aphorisms relating to the doctrine). (3) Abhi Dharm, a commentary on the doctrine. The Pitaks collectively form a canon of Holy Writ and as such are invested by the Buddhists with all the sanctity due to their Holy Scripture. They are believed to contain the actual words of the Master, the text of which was settled at the first council held immediately after Buddha's Nirvāna.

Vajrapāni.—*Vajra*—lightning or a thunderbolt. *Pāni*—hand. "Holding a thunderbolt in his hand." One of the Bodhisattwas found in attendance on Buddha.

Vedic Rail.—The rail surrounding an ancient Vedic temple or sacred tree, and believed to have surrounded the ancient Vedic and Aryan villages and adopted afterwards by the Buddhists for surrounding their Stūpas. The "Vedic," or "Buddhist" rail pattern was much used for ornamentation in Vihāras and Chaityas.

Vihāra.—A large hall, usually surrounded by cells carved out of the rock in which Buddhist monks lived, and which were used for places of assembly and teaching as opposed to the "Chaityas" which were used for worship.

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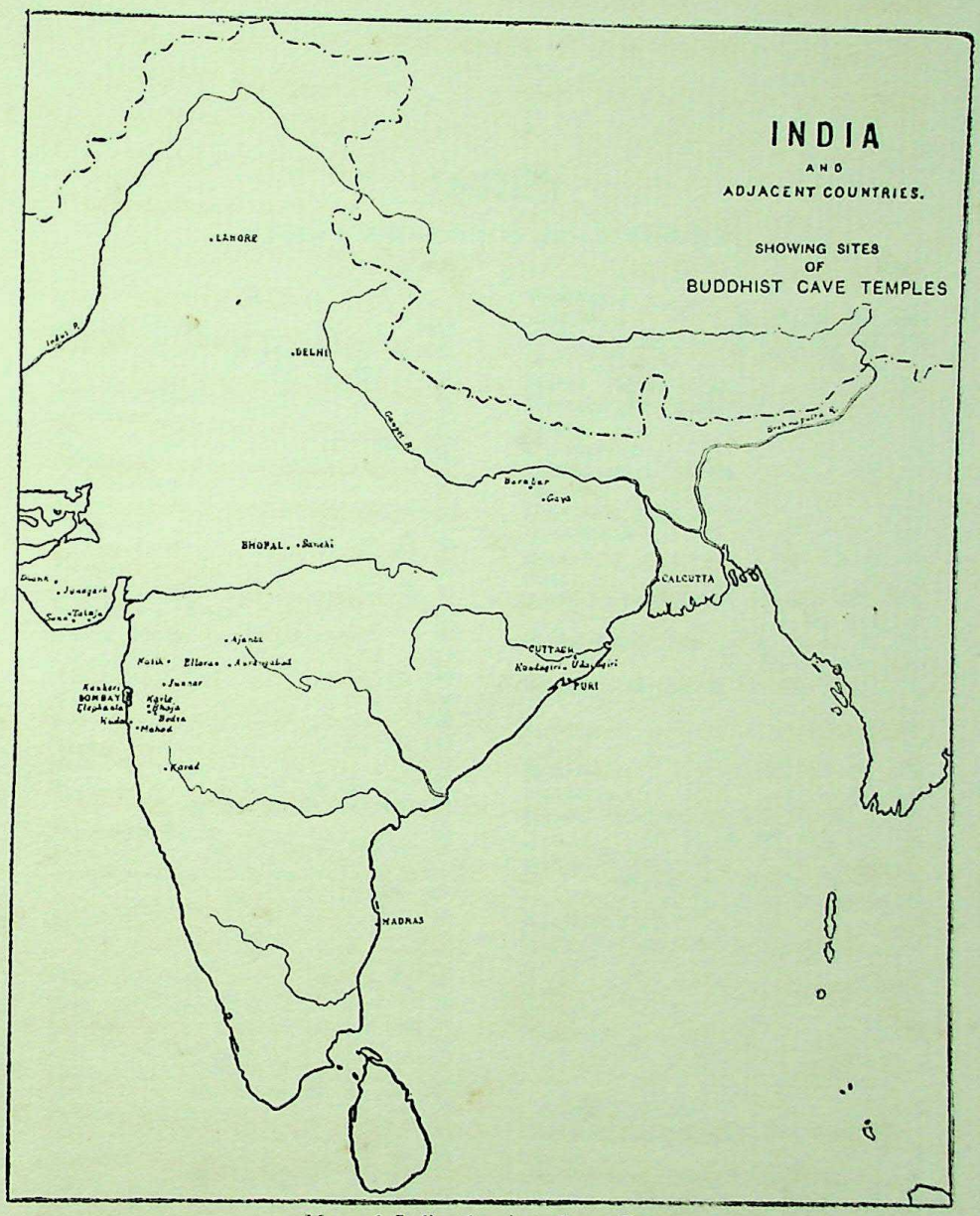

Map of India showing Cave Sites.

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